



Form in the Manner of Landscape: Distillation of a Concept through Language and Literature

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

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May 2011

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Abstract

Past work on the concept of landscape developed the idea that landscape should be viewed less as a noun than as a verb. This develops the idea that “landscape” can be explored as a concept through the fabric of the word itself. This thesis explores through the ambiguity of language, the potential of a landscape idea that considers landscape a verbal action and practice, but also something that retains the objective sense of a noun in abstract representational terms. The potential in landscape to embody paradoxical ideas of movement and substance brings about the consideration of landscape as a relationship of tensions. The visibly apparent expression of a landscape product is the result of their negotiation. There is no correct “way” of doing landscape but the ways in which it is done may be read as apparent propositions towards an unapparent abstract ideal. Through circumstances in time and experience the proposition is renewed and transformed to express a new proposition. This cycle is at the core of a relationship between human and land. The coherence of diversity is its self-preservation.

The idea of diversity ordinarily indicates an idea of landscape framed by deductive thought processes in the sense that disparate branches and off-shoots spread the concept so thinly that it can struggle to find conceptual significance. Considering an inductive approach that draws these disparate branches back into one idea of landscape prompts a renewal in focus, outlining a basic idea or form to which circumstantial performance relates.

The thesis moves from the observation of a theoretical outline to the interpretation of that theory in lived experience and finally to its articulation in a particular way through personal reflection. This study seeks a form of landscape, finds meanings in its use, and then lives the form in a meaningful manner.

Acknowledgements

In the completion of this thesis I have incurred many debts of gratitude, which it is my pleasure to acknowledge here. Professor Patrick Duffy has been a source of great inspiration and encouragement, patiently reading and commenting upon several drafts. Without his teaching, sound advice and faith, this study would have undoubtedly perished in the “well field”. Particular thanks must go to Dr. Mary Gilmartin, my second supervisor, who read and commented incisively upon drafts; to Professor Mark Boyle whose sustained interest, enthusiasm and ability to make time for careful consideration of my work was most valued and appreciated. A very special thanks also to Professor Luke Gibbons and Dr. Hayden Lorimer who, as internal and examiners, enriched my understanding and appreciation of landscape and its implications in a most encouraging manner. Thanks must also go to Dr. Alistair Fraser who read and commented insightfully on an early chapter draft, guiding me in the types of questions I needed to ask of my research. For their interest, and thus their support and encouragement, Dr. Ronan Foley, Dr. Steve McCarron, Dr. Adrian Kavanagh, Dr. Proinnsias Breathnach, Dr. Sinead Kelly, Dr. Conor Murphy, Dr. Mary Kelly, Dr. Priscilla Mooney, Professor Dennis Pringle, Professor John Sweeney, Professor Rob Kitchen, Professor Gerry Kearns and Dr. Karen Till and also to Mary Weld, Gay Murphy, Mick Bolger and Neasa Hogan for their kind and patient support. The Geography Department provided a most friendly and convivial atmosphere for working that made the prospect of my day to day research considerably easier. This was in large part due to my postgraduate colleagues and the collective sense of community that grew naturally. I should also like to thank the John and Pat Hume scholarship scheme for generous financial support during the term of this research. I am thankful to my family whose support in every way throughout this entire process has been unfailing and crucial, not least in the way I have been influenced by a natural and open-hearted love of landscape and place.

To all who have given me time, advice and helped me in myriad ways to complete this research, I give thanks.

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Prologue

This is a thesis rooted in developing an idea of landscape as a relationship of human and land, establishing it and drawing it out into practice. The core thrust of that concept is exploring a common pattern that informs different articulations of a single idea. Its purpose then, is to assert a conceptual focus. Rather than considering how different approaches like materialist or painterly for instance, look within themselves or debate with each other, it is a sustained consideration of the direction in which these diverse expressions are looking as a collective, bypassing the cultural baggage a term like landscape carries around to the skeletal frame of the word itself. One of the problems with landscape is that it seems bereft of an organic structure that allows its multivariate words and ways to speak to an ideal. This thesis takes on the task of conceptual housekeeping - a task different approaches are perhaps too robustly busy to tend to themselves.¹

The thesis approaches this task through language and literature in a way with words or more precisely, different ways with words. An initial foray into the idea of different linguistic conventions is made through the idea of Wittgenstein's language games with the implication that what we say is what we do or knowing is a way of doing as in the sense of Wittgenstein.² There is language and world and then landscape as synthetic. The single idea is something we know of rather than something we can know outright – something we can speak of but not something we can necessarily do, create or achieve ostensibly as is possible in different articulations. This is to imply landscape in practice is a creative act, a creative act with infinitely different configurations but each

¹ Recognition of this problem that really stems from the cultural baggage the word carries around rather than the letters of the word itself comes from many commentators. E.g. Jackson, J. B. (1984) *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p.3ff. This is perhaps best put down to the way: "Landscape inveigles." to borrow a suitably enigmatic, economical sentence of John Stilgoe's. Stilgoe, J. (2005) *Landscape and Images*, Virginia, University of Virginia Press, p.1.

² E.g. "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." Wittgenstein, L., Russell, B. (intro.) (1949) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 5.6ff. In the a wider philosophical context, the tradition of Wittgenstein, one that has the human practically implicated in a life-world is one that stands apart from another perhaps more standard approach that reaches back to Descartes at least, which has human more as knower than doer, describing a world one is distinct from. Perhaps this philosophical standard may be more akin to the idea of landscape as distant object or spectacle to be seen rather than embodied in. E.g. Descartes, R., Sutcliffe, F.E. (intro. and trans.) (1970) *Discourse on Method and Meditations*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.

embodying a common pattern and hinting at an elusive idea. As a creative act landscape is derivative of human and land, expressive of a relationship that is dependent on the interaction of both.

This approximates to an idea of consciousness in the sense that in terms of landscape, its existence is dependent on our consciousness of land, and the existence of our consciousness is dependent on land or world. So it is landscape is a secondary and derivative thing. This idea of derivation in form means that landscape may transcend particular language games and conventions, manifesting in a common pattern that is residual in superficial differences or manners of the form. Edward Said's work on a fictional autobiography of Conrad is illustrative of this in work carried out not on Conrad or Conrad's books, but on the consciousness that is derivative of both.³ Said's approach lends itself to a phenomenological method and this is a point of access to the role of phenomenology in humanist geographical traditions and its evolution into post-phenomenological or performative approaches. The consideration is with how these might help us get an inkling into the particular and different rendered landscapes that hint at a single idea. Really a way with words – whether it be aesthetic and fine-tuned or coarse and workmanlike, is all we have to express our ideas and to bring our own particular landscapes to fruition. What this approach affords is a structure that allows us as geographers to do justice to the subtleties and nuances of all the precariously different concoctions of flesh, spirit and earthen patterns.

This idea of precariousness is rendered through a relationship of becoming to being that is one of difference to sameness – the thing known outright to the thing known of. This implies a dimensional abstract single idea. The thesis considers landscape a twofold structure of being and becoming – realising this potential in the possibility of landscape as a word that can embody the qualities of both noun and verb. In its embodiment of these qualities, the thesis dwells on how they relate to each other within the overall philosophical concept or cosmology we might even call it. There is an abstract, absolute sense and a practical sense and the thesis explores how these interact

³ Said, E. (1966) *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, New York, Columbia University Press.

with one another to express a single idea in different ways in the sense of “*e pluribus unum*”.

There is relative motion at work. Each articulation of landscape made in apparent reality, that is the world we live in, may be considered an imperfect or inchoate rendering of a perfect or absolute constant – a particular “thingness of a thing” as it were.⁴ All the different articulations possible in the living world (be they scholastic or more popular) illuminate or illustrate a particular insight into a universal idea. There is the ideal landscape and there is the trace of that ideal written into all its attempted renderings in the manner of place, or indeed placelessness for that matter.⁵ Of course the ideal itself may never materialise since that would mean death for the continuous process of landscape in everyday living.⁶ To embody perfection would effectively end landscape as it works in the movement of everyday living. The question is then how to grasp the movement and, grasp it in a meaningful way? Lefebvre lends a hint in his assertion that “everyday insignificance can only become meaningful when transformed into something other than everyday life.”⁷ If we take landscape as a relationship of human and land, something in which human and land are ineluctably included, then the relationship goes through a process of familiarisation in which it finds its voice or its own particular articulation. This articulation is an achievement of that relationship, a perpetually imperfect product that shows familiarity with the idea of perfection but can never quite fulfil it or know it completely.

It is not so much that these attempts that find their voice in articulation are conscious efforts to render perfection but it is more an illustration of the elusive character of landscape as something that is shiftless and difficult to grasp as an idea. This is broached by Richard Muir for instance in his belief that as landscape study has grown its branches, of which there are many, some closer than others, have somewhat inevitably grown apart meaning that none of them individually fulfil a complete

⁴ Heidegger, M. (1971) *Poetry, Language, Thought*, New York, Harper Colophon, pp.213-229

⁵ Relph, E. (1976) *Place and Placelessness*, London, Pion.

⁶ Pascal’s aphorism illustrates this idea: “Our nature consists in motion; complete rest is death” Pascal, B. & Levi, H. (trans.) (1995) *Pensées & Other Writings*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.1-182, II. 129.

⁷ Lefebvre, H., Rabinovitch, S. (1971) *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, New York, Harper & Row, p.98.

understanding.⁸ Situating that difficulty within a broader context and offsetting it against constancy can make that shiftlessness more traceable, more understandable if not necessarily resolvable. The thesis is a focus less on the particular branches of landscape study but more on the word, the single idea from which these sprout. For this reason the dissertation eschews a commitment to, or deep interactive engagement with, sources that are particular expressions of a landscape relationship, be they art historical or cultural materialist or Marxist for instance.⁹ Instead, the focus is on the logic and rationality of a common landscape pattern within and beyond such approaches - how the idea of landscape is produced and consumed as Mitchell would put it¹⁰, rather than particular instances of, or responses to that production and consumption.

This approximation of a common pattern or single idea in effect means the thesis proposes a system or structure (or perhaps more accurately 'a way of doing') for the making and realisation of landscape. It is an aesthetic; a way of working or a principle not so much designed for obedience as it is for guidance and in this respect poetry and the idea of a poetic tradition is a useful interlocutor. This is particularly so when considered in light of Czesław Miłosz's rather beautifully weighted belief that "the purpose of poetry is to remind us how difficult it is to remain just one person, for our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, and invisible guests come in and out at will."¹¹ Each case may express a purpose in a different way superficially. However the pattern of a relationship of human and land is residual in the context of individuality or communality and perhaps most pointed in the friction at the threshold between them.

⁸ E.g. Keller, C. (1994) 'The Theoretical Aspects of Landscape Study' in Collins, T. (ed.) *Decoding the Landscape*, Galway, The Centre for Landscape Studies, pp.79-99 (p.79) "We seek some kind of understanding that none of the disciplines are able to produce."

⁹ E.g. Williams, R. (1973) *The Country and the City*, Oxford, Oxford University Press; Barrell, J. (1980) *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Bermingham, A. (1986) *Landscape and Ideology: The English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860*, Berkeley, University of California Press Cosgrove, D. (1985) 'Prospect, perspective and the evolution of the Landscape Idea', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 10(1), 45-62 etc.

¹⁰ Mitchell, D. (1994) 'Landscape and Surplus Value: The Making of the Ordinary in Brentwood CA', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, (12), pp.7-30, (p.9).

¹¹ Miłosz, C. 'Ars Poetica' in Miłosz, C. & Vallee, L. (1978) *The Collected Poems: 1931-1987*, New York, The Ecco Press, p.11.

This is an effective approach in that it affords the opportunity to trace a common pattern through different linguistic conventions. A poetic convention illustrates this difference well in that as a mode of language use, it pushes words beyond what they do in everyday speech. It also brings them in a different direction to more clinical scientific language, perhaps in a more obviously different way than prose writing might. Of course each of these linguistic traditions or conventions has in turn, several conventions and traditions within themselves. For example, Heaney and Yeats are guided in different ways within the Irish poetic tradition and indeed this particular instance and the way Heaney differentiates himself from Yeats is considered in the course of the thesis. More generally though, for the purposes of illustrating how the theory of landscape transcends the particularities of poetic and everyday or scientific, a general idea of differing conventions will suffice. The primary concern is establishing a common pattern or like-mindedness between the different systems of language use.

In its proposition of landscape, the thesis explores the malleability of the word itself as a means of unlocking its conceptual potential. While it may be said that landscape is a difficult term that defies resolution, it is not enough merely to leave it there. The difficulty must be confronted, teased out and reasoned with so that if landscape is something that defies easy resolution, we may know how and why it is so in order that we may cope with irresolution and understand and explain it rather than merely accept it at face value, be bewildered by it or dismissive of it. The idea of landscape as a two-fold structure comes to terms with this irresolution exploring why it might be so. This irresolution, something that might ordinarily be considered a weakness of landscape, is at the core of its strength. This is in the sense that difference or shiftlessness is celebrated in the perpetual exploration of sameness. It is a journey without end, back and forth continually restorative and transformative in the refreshing beauty of imperfection.

In terms of depicting particular expression in the context of a general idea, the thesis makes a transitory move through the illustrative poetic tradition. This tradition is accessed through a family tree of poets which I have become familiar prior to this study, primarily comprising Wordsworth, Heaney, Frost, Yeats and Kavanagh. This is

an approach that, by virtue of pre-existing personal significance, lends itself to the final autobiographical way with words, allowing for an implicitly rendered slip and slide between each of the three parts of the thesis. This is so as to convey the particular ownership of the more general concept of landscape. This has an illustrative benefit for the thesis as a whole in highlighting different conventions of speech and writing or more essentially, different ways with words over the three constituent parts. It underlines how these all, in spite of their superficial differences, exhibit a common pattern in the making of an idea. In this respect the thesis also helps us to understand the mechanics of geography as a discipline where all the different parts illuminate different aspects of earth-writing. These are all particular approaches that have a common pattern rendered in their approach to a single ideal.

Interpreting the idea of a common pattern by the guiding light of a poetic tradition indicates the way a tradition or a single idea may manifest itself. It comes down to a way with words or different ways with words and the infinite potential of such ways to render an idea like landscape. This is most tellingly illustrated in the thesis through an etymological excavation of words. Beyond that though, it also comes down to a power of self-effacement - a kind of belief that one may be part of something beyond themselves or that a tradition may be speaking through them, guiding them along different ways. It is not necessarily that one elides oneself through impersonality, but that one gives oneself over to a process and the creation of a particular product that derives itself from personality.¹² If human and land are mutually transformative, then that sense of transformation is effected in the articulated language of landscape as relationship.

Expressing this, the thesis itself mirrors a developing landscape relationship, moving through observation, interpretation and articulation. This is signalled most directly in a narrative transformation from third person to first person in order to illustrate a developing a sense of self where human and land are subsumed into the “I” – a middle voice between human and land in landscape. There is thus separation implied in the concept but it is a separation between form and manner rather than between human

¹² Cf. Joyce, J, (1996) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, London, Penguin Popular Classics, p.215

and “the landscape” as it were. Human insight is implied in the fabric of the word as verb and verbal action. Different ways, particular circumstances, traditions and conditions of living stretch landscape out to incorporate a fuller sensory register, developing the idea that a particular approach might be part of a more universal concept. In terms of the particularity of approach an autobiographical approach is taken in order to convey the idea of use and ownership of the process and the articulated product. A more ethnographic approach to its writing would remove the directness of the articulation and the sense of developing closeness progressing from interpretation. This first person narrative rendering indicates an intimacy of use that illuminates the rudimentary occurrences and experiences of the everyday, relative to a more general idea. In reading the thesis, most pointedly in the third part, an ethnographic sensibility may be a useful means of engagement.¹³

Within the terms of the thesis, the idea of landscape as relationship is ultimately explored through personal stories, each superficially different but each retaining a common pattern, each an imperfect expression of a single perfect ideal. Taking the idea of landscape as a relationship, these stories attempt to realise that relationship. Such is the way of thinking that crafts landscape in this thesis, that it tolerates infinitely different ways of rendering the relationship. This is a feature that is illustrated by the very particular rendering of the final part. Having grown up on a farm in the Irish midland county of Westmeath and having lived there for a good portion of my life, leaving only so that I might attend university. The experiences gathered up over that time have seen me steeped in an educational tradition: more specifically geographical and classical traditions together with an ongoing immersion in an agricultural tradition: more specifically an Irish, midland agrarian tradition. These lend themselves in a very particular way to the making of a landscape relationship. This is an approach that converses with an ongoing project on the distinctive Irish aspects of rendered landscapes.¹⁴

¹³ Stewart, K. (1996) *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an “Other” America*, Princeton, Princeton University Press and Glassie, H. (1995) *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*, Indiana, Indiana University Press are examples of such an ethnographic approach

¹⁴ E.g. Lysaght, S. (1997) ‘Contrasting Natures: The Issue of Names’ in Wilson-Foster, J. (ed.) *Nature in Ireland: A Scientific and Cultural History*, Dublin, The Lilliput Press, pp.440-461; Duffy, P. (2007) *Exploring*

The thesis reaches the point of conclusion coming to terms with irresolution in the sense that there are infinitely different ways of rendering the single idea of landscape but no particular way can embody the idea in complete perfection. The conclusion is written in such a way as to reflect this, telling different stories all linked by a common pattern informing a single idea. That is to say that my own particular experience will certainly be different from others but there is a common pattern to be distilled in the essential process and product of a landscape relationship. This is a means to illustrate the way the stories we all have in the making of our relationships with land, in the broadest possible sense of the term, are the devices with which to get a sense of a universal idea.

the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes, Dublin, Four Courts Press; Slater, E. (2009) 'The Postcolonial Landscape Aesthetic of the Quiet Man', (*NIRSA Working Paper Series*, No. 45, NIRSA – National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis; Gibbons, L. (1996) 'Topographies of Terror: Killarney and the Politics of the Sublime', *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 95(1), 23-45; Outram, D. (1997) 'The History of Natural History: Grand Narrative or Local Lore?' in Wilson-Foster, J. op. cit. pp.461-472; Bartley, B. & Kitchin, R. (eds.) (2007) *Understanding Contemporary Ireland*, London, Pluto Press.

Chapter One: General Introductory Review

As you set out for Ithaca
Hope the voyage is a long one,
Full of adventure, full of discovery.
- Constantine Cavafy - 'Ithaca'¹⁵

1.1 Introduction

This study is fundamentally concerned with landscape and with relationships that create landscape. It is concerned with placing landscape in a collective understanding that finds a sense of movement or process in a concept that is often seen as a largely material, objective product. It often requires the help of an adjectival 'natural' or 'cultural' to distinguish the involvement or expression of human influence upon it.¹⁶ It is an idea of relationship that leans towards landscape as something acted upon by culture or something that is 'there' and removed from human process by its natural materiality.¹⁷ For instance, culture as a term may be something that distils a particular sense of landscape, but what of a sense of landscape more generally? From what sense does the particularity of a cultural landscape derive? This general introduction is designed to approach some ideas that will be useful in distilling a concept of landscape in a sense that is independent of adjectival enhancement. It is about finding a way into the kernel of the idea of landscape as a concept and from there, considering how that concept is enacted in the context of lived experience. As a stepping stone to the articulated lived experience, the concept will be interpreted through the prism of the written text. This is to emphasise the importance of language and also to allow an interpretive space for testing the concept.

In terms of the journey this chapter will take in accessing this approach, it is first necessary to locate the study in the frame of a wider geographical context and more

¹⁵ Cavafy, C. P. (1911) 'Ithaca' in Cavafy, C.P., Keeley, E. & Sherrard, P. (trans.), Savidis, G. (ed.) (1992) *The Collected Poems*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, p.36.

¹⁶ Cf. Mitchell, D. (2000) *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.99. As Mitchell notes, "culture" and "landscape" are complex terms. This is in spite of, or perhaps because of, the simple sense of their introduction into geography. He also notes how Mitchell refers to landscape as a natural scene mediated by culture. Mitchell, W.J.T. (ed.) (1994) *Landscape and Power*, London, Routledge, p.1.

¹⁷ Latour, B. (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern*, London, Harvester Wheatsheaf. Latour sought to alter this habit into a more relational idea expressed through 'Actor Network Theory', discussed further below.

specifically, in the way that geography engages with the written text as a source for geographical information. With that established, it will move on to the underlying philosophy of such engagement. Then, it will be necessary to challenge that approach with the consideration of some of its critiques. At this stage the discussion will have expanded to geography more generally so it will be necessary to draw back in to landscape more specifically, considering how geography and landscape relate, more specifically, how cultural geography and landscape relate. The approach that will be implicitly drawn out as the chapter progresses will be an idea of language as an interpretive foundation, that the word 'landscape' itself might provide some clues as to its conceptual profile as abstract and practice. This chapter starts off an inductive process that continues throughout the thesis. It is about revealing layers as might befit a layered landscape. The ultimate lesson is that the layers are infinite and so the work is designed to take on a more cyclical than linear feel. It is about rearing a concept of landscape to an articulated pinnacle that is ultimately momentary. By the conclusion, induction will have swung around to deduction. There is a journey to and from the product and again, some route back to it. If there is an end, then it is one that informs the beginning, bringing us back around again to a different end. There is no absolute 'end', as it were, to the landscape we experience.

This work is about establishing an abstract concept of landscape and developing an understanding of how that abstract relates to everyday life. It is about developing a way of knowing landscape so that it may teach us something about the way we live our lives in relation to, or as part of, our landscapes. In other words, it is about establishing landscape not as an object or a distinct entity, but rather as a relationship between humans and the lands they interact with. Fundamental to any relationship is communication and language. Expressing the landscape relationship is a point of access to engaging with the fundamental form of landscape and the manner of its potentially infinite manifestations in the visibly expressed lived life. If there is a basic way of 'landscaping', then the purpose of this study is to distil this commonality or sameness from the different ways that it is manifest in the reality of the everyday. Like language, landscape is constantly changing and the challenge for this work is making the constant knowable without inhibiting a capacity for change. This general introduction is about

establishing a way of broaching this issue and the engaged relationship of human and land. The relationship is a symbiotic one and though there is no absolute unity, there is a unified collective. The space between human and land is filled by the expression of landscape. This introduction is about establishing broad strokes, a general means of accessing a more specifically workable concept. It establishes some key conceptual foci that will be teased out as the thesis progresses. Mainly, this is done by means of the footnotes and the way they are used to expand on ideas in the main text, contextualising them and making their genealogy apparent.

1.2 Geography and the idea of landscape as medium

To understand landscape as a ‘way of seeing’¹⁸ for instance, is to attribute a certain level of human engagement in the formation of landscape that introduces an idea of process expressive of a relationship that is inclusive of both human and land as neither subject nor object in the sense that they act together in equal measure to produce landscape. The idea of landscape as “a way of seeing” however, does not fully encompass this sense of symbiosis. While landscape is to an extent visually produced and expressed, it is not an entirely visual process. It is inclusive of both land and human and all facets of their mutual existence. The idea with landscape is a mutually inclusive expression of a collective self that illustrates equally significant activities of human and land and their productive symbiosis. Both process and product are expressions of landscape. In other words, landscape seems to create itself. If we are to explore an idea of landscape then it should conceptually occupy both a creative process and the product of that process.

This exploration means that neither landscape nor humanity as distinct or removed from one another are foci for this study. The specific relationship between human and

¹⁸ Richard Muir (1999) helpfully and concisely in his introduction highlights this fundamental division in landscape comprehension. “On the one hand there is the conventional practice of regarding landscape as a material or tangible portion of a natural and cultural environment. On the other there is the treatment of landscape as ‘a way of seeing’ which is associated with Daniels and Cosgrove and their disciples, who interpret landscape as a painterly way of seeing the world which creates a picturesque view” Muir, R. (1999) *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan, pp. xiv-xv. See Cosgrove, D. & Daniels, S. (1988) *The Iconography of Landscape*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

land is the operative concept. Thus in order to approach landscape in a sense that does not treat it as object, we must explore means of accessing such an idea. This involves a look at philosophies and ways of explaining the express nature of a relationship that landscape embodies. This will entail consideration of philosophies such as phenomenology and existentialist phenomenology, theoretical developments such as actor network theory and, perhaps more directly expressive of relationship, ideas of communication and language through linguistic theory. Ideas such as ANT or phenomenology may in some of their elements seem quite in opposition to each other but we shall see that it is through tension and paradox, illustrated for instance by ideas of difference and sameness, that landscape is not only formulated but continues to formulate in an on-going fashion.

The idea of a human and land relationship imbues a necessary specificity and focus for understanding and explanation. The main point of illustrative access is through the written text in which landscape is often rendered in the manner of a relationship. It often encapsulates and articulates the essence of a landscape relationship and is thereby the main source for tangible understanding in this study. Looking into the text, an important way of understanding the process in the product of landscape is to approach it from a linguistic angle through which we can understand how words are shared and communicated, considered and chosen. Such an angle is facilitated well by analysis of written text and perhaps more specifically in the poetic context in which editing and development of words is perhaps more intense than in most media. The idea of a medium is a useful way of approaching landscape since it is itself a medium of human and land. It is in the medium, the distance between human and land that landscape is created and thus human and land drawn together in a dissoluble collective. Landscape occurs in the spaces between human and land and the words identify that occurrence.

Boyle and Kobayashi note of Sartre that his concept of being in the sense of the existence of the human is both spatial and relative, thus, existence occurs relative to others with that relativity reaching across a spatially defined distance.¹⁹ Not only is there

¹⁹ Boyle, M. & Kobayashi, A. (2011) 'Metropolitan Anxieties: A Critical Appraisal of Sartre's Theory of Colonialism', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36: no. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-

distance between the self and other selves, but there is also a distance between the self and the land one occupies, dwells in, or experiences. Landscape is a way of expressing that relativity, formulated in the distance between humans and land and traceable through the words that give an articulated voice to that relationship. But this relationship is constantly changing both in the way it is written and read, divined as it is from on-going life experience. Thus being we may understand as a set condition, an abstract state. Perhaps a concomitant idea of becoming may serve to encapsulate a practical sense of this ongoing, continually developing relationship. The relationship may be a fundamental given, but the practical criteria of that relationship are always subject to change.

Approaching the concept of landscape from a linguistic angle, particularly through the different ways words may be wielded, offers an alternative to traditional painterly ways of seeing or outward manifestations. Words employed in creating landscape encourage an understanding of landscape that is based on a symbiotic concept. Land shapes words and thus human while conversely, human shapes words and thus land. Language and thought transcend internal and external, giving a fuller sense of involvement and expression in landscape. Through the changes in language we can see landscape changing as experience is distilled into articulation.

In essence we can describe this study as seeking to uncover fundamental geographical meaning in the written text. In this respect, we are taking on value laden sources which are inscribed with varieties of meaning and interpretive levels. As sources, poetry and prose are traditionally understood as highly subjective. This study is concerned with extending this idea to a sense of the sources written not just by human but also by land. The expressive voice and the words on the page are thus indicative of a relationship as landscape medium. The words of text communicated broaden landscape not only as relationship between human and land but also between *humans* and *lands*. A consistent theme throughout this study will be the consideration of fluidity and malleability as

5661.2011.00428.x, p.12. See Sartre, J.P. (1969 c. 1958) *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, London, Methuen, p.242ff.

highly characteristic of landscape; a direct result of human engagement and symbolic of the inter-relationship that revolves through communication of multiple humans and lands. A relationship between land and human producing apparent realities through experience and the friction of related circumstance renders an ever changing visible landscape. In order to have the freedom to express this in an appropriate geographical manner we must begin with an approach that involves considered potentiality of experience, expression and change over time as values.

Firstly, it may be concluded that methodologically, behavioural geography, continuing within the traditions of quantitative and scientific analysis, led it to be considered more as an outgrowth of, rather than a reaction to, spatial science. In other words behavioural geography might justifiably be considered reductive and simplistic as an extension of spatial science. The subsequent criticisms of the humanist school considered that this objective attachment to the mechanistic principles of spatial science rendered it overly simplistic due to an excessively objective outlook.²⁰

Considering this focus, the tenets of behavioural geography, espousing a value-free, objective approach of scientific explanation may be deemed inadequate for the purposes of this project. Let us then consider a humanistic approach to place and the relationship between human and land that sees its creation.²¹ As Hubbard writes, “humanistic theories about subjectivity, meaning and experience subtly shift the focus of geography from space to place.”²² In light of this, let us remember that our focus is

²⁰ See Entrikin, N. (1976) ‘Contemporary Humanism in Geography’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 66, 615-32 on the reactionary definition of humanist geography. “The Humanist approach is defined by its proponents in geography and in other human sciences as a reaction against what they believe to be an overly objective, narrow and mechanistic and deterministic view of the human being presented in much of contemporary research in the human sciences. Humanist geographers argue that their approach deserves the appellation ‘humanistic’ in that they study the aspects of people which are most distinctively ‘human’: meaning, value, goals and purpose.” p.616. See Cloke, P., Philo, C., & Sadler, D. (eds.) (1991) *Approaching Human Geography: An Introduction to Contemporary Theoretical Debates*, London, Sage, p.69ff. This idea led Cloke et al. (1991) to the conclusion that Behavioural geography was and indeed, is a largely forgotten element of human geography. See Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R., & Valentine, G. (2004) *Key Thinkers in Space and Place*, London, Sage, p.139.

²¹ See Buttimer, A. (1993) *Geography and the Human Spirit*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press in which she highlights the extent to which the relevance that is given to a sense of place begins at the subjective level. There is thus a need to uncover the subjective level and recognise its influence.

²² Hubbard, P. (2002) ‘Geographies of Text’ in Hubbard, P. et al, (eds.) *Thinking Geographically*, New York Continuum, p.128.

on landscape, so some immediate issues involve the promulgation of a human-centred subjective approach that devalues the democratic value of landscape relationship by disregarding objectivity. In a humanistic sense this is perhaps best illustrated by a focus largely on place. If we are to develop landscape as a concept we must be careful to avoid dismissing space as an implicit element since it is potentially of value in the wider understanding of landscape. Landscape should and in fact must, through its implicit tension and paradox, embody space and place and thus both object and subject.

In developing the terms of our values, it is best to begin by analysing surveys of human geographical thought over the last forty or fifty years which is about the time of paradigmatic shift from behavioural to humanistic geography and the interface of a subject/object division. Johnston delivers a good survey of Anglo-American geography since 1945.²³ Peet perhaps encapsulates most lucidly the genesis of the humanistic school of thought in terms of its heritage and place in the geographical tradition.

Humanistic geography immediately drew on the powerful critiques of positivist science long theorised by existential and phenomenological philosophy. These had quite direct applicability to a criticism of the quantitative, theoretical geography of the 1950's and 1960's. There was a tendency also to find continuity between humanistic geography's ideas and certain pre-positivistic themes in geography, especially notions of place and landscape.²⁴

The work of Peet shares similarities and differences with that of Johnston. The differences are mainly down to interpretation and emphasis. It is because of these reasons that it is felt Peet encapsulates the essence of the humanistic school. Unlike Johnston, Peet does not straight-jacket his study in the language of paradigms but instead uses a series of distinctions between social theories, philosophies and meta-philosophies which take account of paradigmatic inter-relationships rather than divisive interfaces. This is a consideration of geographical development from the position of understanding rather than sole explanation. In cognate belief, it is a central tenet of this work that landscape be based not only on an interpretive understanding but also articulated explanation and observed consideration.

²³ Johnston, R.J. (1997) *Geography and Geographers*, London, Arnold.

²⁴ Peet, M. (1998) *Modern Geographical Thought*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.34.

From Peet to Ley and Samuels²⁵, they trace the lineage of the humanistic school to Vidal de la Blache and French human geography²⁶, Sauer and the Berkeley school of geography²⁷, in turn to Wright on the history of geographical lore²⁸ and then to Lowenthal²⁹ on the personal experience of landscape³⁰. These studies led to a transformation, but not necessarily a resolution of contradictions in landscape which made it a liability as a scientific term, into a phenomenon for epistemological inquiry. It still retained its scientific liability though. Lowenthal explored the way in which perception and conception conspire to shape an individual's mental image of the 'real' world, believing that

Every image and idea about the world is compounded...of personal experience, learning, imagination, and memory...The surface of the earth is shaped for each person by refraction through cultural and personal lenses of custom and fancy.³¹

The language of imagery implies the idea of distance and objectification but the idea of earth as being shaped for the person is a subtle but perhaps not intentional indication that land may not be something that is merely acted upon but something which possibly might just as importantly act itself in shaping.

Ironically enough and an indication of the blurred lines of paradigmatic interaction, the humanistic school finds its conceptual roots in a behavioural approach. This line of thought draws from the behavioural concept of geosophy developed by Wright.³² He introduced this term from a humanistic, hermeneutic approach, arguing for the consideration of exploring the nature and expression of "the geographical ideas, both true and false, of all manner of people - not only geographers, but farmers and fishermen, business executives and poets, novelists and painters, Bedouins and

²⁵ Ley, D. & Samuels, M. (eds.) (1978) *Humanistic geography: Prospects and problems*, London, Croom Helm.

²⁶ Muir, R. (1999) *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan, p.8ff.

²⁷ *ibid.* p.12ff.

²⁸ Wright, J.K., (1925) *Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades*, New York, Dover Publications.

²⁹ Lowenthal, D. (1961) 'Geography, Experience and Imagination', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51, 241-260.

³⁰ Peet, M. (1998) *Modern Geographical Thought*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.8-10.

³¹ Lowenthal, D. (1961) 'Geography, Experience and Imagination', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 51, 241-260 (p.250).

³² Wright, J.K. (1947) 'Terrae Incognitae: The Place of the Imagination in Geography', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 37, 1-15.

Hottentots”.³³ Importantly, the idea of concepts as being right or wrong is removed. Applied to landscape one may consider that there is no right or wrong landscape or perhaps more accurately, no right or wrong way of ‘landscaping’. As well as this, everyone can have ideas on geographical phenomena such as landscape. Landscape as process and product then is something that can be developed to express ideas held by all types of people.

Wright’s outlook fed into Lowenthal’s argument that all humans live in personal worlds, and different cultures have their own shared stereotypes, attempting to create environments that reflect these stereotypes. “Each private world view is also unique because everyone chooses from and reacts to the milieu in a different way. We elect to see certain aspects of the world and to avoid others.”³⁴ Again the idea of right and wrong is removed in light of the validity of experience and expression that is considered here from the perspective of the person who chooses but let us also consider that the person may be chosen by initial natural prompts. A viable way of finding and examining this idea of personal expression is through the medium of the text in which landscape might be considered as written and encoded within one’s language.³⁵ If we understand landscape as a relationship of human and land in which both are regarded as equally significant, then we may consider that landscape writes itself. The text can be a medium of human and land and thereby itself a landscape. As a result let us understand landscape not so much *as* text but rather that landscape *is* text. The way in which this

³³ *ibid* p.12.

³⁴ Lowenthal, D. (1961) ‘Geography, Experience and Imagination’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51, p.251 Cf. Jones, J.P. (2003) ‘Introduction: Reading Geography through Binary Oppositions’ in Anderson, K., et al. (eds.) *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, Sage Publications, pp.511-520. E.g. “Wright (1947) and Lowenthal (1961) offered the first serious challenges to scientific epistemology” p. 514.

³⁵ See Duffy, P. (2007) ‘Writing landscapes’ in Duffy, P., *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, pp.199-228, “Just as our cognitive understanding of landscape today is based on personal perception of surroundings, or feelings and emotional connections with place, so too such insights [the poetry of Seamus Heaney or Patrick Kavanagh] into past landscapes are valid sources of knowledge” p.226. According to Johnston et al (2000) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford, Blackwell, writing landscapes opens a world for intellectual enquiry, making it intelligible through active and creative function of language, p.579; see also Sheeran P, (1994) ‘The Narrative Creation of Place: The Example of Yeats’ in Collins, T. (ed.) *Decoding the Landscape*, Galway, The Centre for landscape Studies Social Sciences Research Centre, University College Galway, pp.149-165: Sheeran talks of the inadequacy of J.C. Beckett’s view of landscape as objective and stable, rightly claiming that “This view ignores a number of important points. It forgets that land and place are made up of language as much as if not more than, they are made of earth and buildings.” p.150.

thesis is written mirrors the processes that the making of a landscape product undergoes. The landscape product is something worked towards and worked from. Reaching an end informs a new beginning and then a new end. This comes out of Thrift's pioneering work in non-representational theory and his criticisms of 'landscape as text' that consigned everyday life, living experience or simply practice, to a position below that of a primary discursive structure.³⁶ One of the central problems signposted by this realisation is the problem of imbalance. This thesis is about crafting a sense of landscape as relationship and finding a way of balancing discursive structure and everyday practice within that relationship. Writing from where landscape is text as well as acknowledging that any structure is not ultimate or set, is a way of coming to terms with this imbalance.

1.3 Geographies of the Text

On the geography of the text, Brosseau has written of how geographers have considered the documentary benefits of literature, especially as a means of situating or restoring geography as a subject in the humanities. The value of literature may be seen in the way it can afford an understanding of landscape perception that opens up its didactic potential.³⁷ This thesis explores some of that potential considering, with the aid of a textual sensibility, the way landscape may be perceived as a concept in Part I 'Observations' and then exploring the didactic value of the text in Part II 'Interpretations'. The third part, 'Articulations' is a way of coming to terms with the lessons learnt from parts I and II. In terms of tying this into language and underlining the importance of the concept of language in the text, Olsson is effective in the way he is not limited to the study of visible things in his work. Similarly he is also concerned with talking 'in' rather than about something.³⁸ The approach to landscape taken in this thesis is based on talking 'in' text as a means of accessing the landscape that is text. In addition he has spoken of ideas surrounding linguistic geometry or a cartography of thought. This leans towards ideas of theory and practice and for Olsson this clusters

³⁶ Thrift, N. (1996) *Spatial Formations*, London, Sage Publications.

³⁷ Brosseau, M. (1994) 'Geography's Literature', *Progress in Human Geography*, 18 (3), 333-353.

³⁸ Olsson, G. (1992) *Lines of Power/Limits of Language*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

around ideas pertaining to ‘of’ and ‘in’ in that there are those writing of in his case, a post-modern geographical praxis, and those working to produce a text that directly demonstrates or is such praxis. This thesis takes the latter side, aiming to demonstrate landscape in the praxis of the text. The structure of the thesis is written so that it is itself, demonstrably a landscape. Common to this idea of text, whether one is writing ‘in’ or ‘of’ it, is language. For the moment though, it is worthwhile contextualizing this thesis by briefly exploring the idea of the text, a medium for the wielding of words, in the subject of Geography as a science of synthesis.

Hubbard et al.³⁹ are particularly thorough in covering the geographies of the text. In their terms, post-modern thinkers offer three important contributions to our understanding of texts. Firstly, they broaden the concept of text and make it include anything that possesses meaning and is open to interpretation. Thus, in addition to the conventional written texts that we have, landscapes, pictures, social get-togethers, film, etc. are also texts in which meaning is given by both the author (the actor) and the reader (the viewer). If landscape is text, then it is open to interpretation. Additionally, by virtue of this, text meanings are exchanged by author and reader as communication shapes reading, acting and embodiment of text. This communication is an active process that produces landscape.

Second, social theorists emphasize the role of the reader in assigning a meaning to a text. They claim that every text has multiple meanings and these meanings change from one reader to another. This argument directly challenges the positivist claim that social phenomena can be studied objectively. Objectivity may thus be considered a fiction, when we consider Nietzsche who wrote of “the positivism which halts at phenomena – ‘There are only facts’ - I would say: no, facts are just what there aren’t, there are only interpretations”.⁴⁰ Thus in landscape there are only appearances or phenomena. This means that we must consider landscape as devoid of fact, absolute and presumably ‘being’ fundamentally. This is a somewhat worrying disregard for landscape since

³⁹ Hubbard, P. (2002) ‘Geographies of Text’ in Hubbard, P. et al. *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory and Contemporary Human Geography*, New York, Continuum, pp.124-146.

⁴⁰ Nietzsche, F., Bittner, R. (ed.) Sturge, K. (trans.) (2003) *Writings from the late Notebooks*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.139.

without ‘being’ the concept may evaporate into nothingness without some degree of parameter. Let us take the example of a river, were there only water and no banks then we could not call it a river. Similarly if there were only banks and no water we could not call it a river. Thus with landscape our concept should find a way to include both a sense of absolute rootedness and a sense of free movement.

Finally, Hubbard et al. explain some “new” thinkers argue that texts cannot be studied in isolation from other texts. They suggest that a text cannot have an autonomous meaning, but only a series of unstable meanings produced intertextually.⁴¹ Thus it is that landscape cannot exist in a vacuum. Landscapes are constantly compared and contrasted and consequently changed in the manner of their articulation appearance. In order to realize this idea of flux and change we must place texts and landscapes in wider communities or communicative frameworks to tease out the way communication contributes to the formation of landscape phenomena. In *Writing Worlds*, Barnes and Duncan argue that

‘Text’ is also an appropriate trope to use in analyzing landscapes because it conveys the inherent instability of meaning, fragmentation or absence of integrity, lack of authorial control, polyvocality and irresolvable social contradictions that often characterise them.⁴²

The instability of the text and the fluidity of its meaning may be considered a product of tensions between texts or, intertextuality. This intertextual quality sees author and reader afforded a similar degree of influence. This has the result of anonymity in that writer and reader, through the medium of the text, move to a plain beyond themselves. The tension or the friction between author and reader and the blurring of lines between such roles in the make-up of the text see it embody “a web-like complexity, characterized by a ceaseless play of infinitely unstable meanings.”⁴³ This is related to the conceit of Actor Network Theory in that there is no such thing as ‘cultural’ or ‘natural’

⁴¹ Hubbard, P. et al. (2002) p.137.

⁴² Barnes, T.J. & Duncan, J.S. (1992) ‘Introduction: Writing Worlds’ in Barnes, T.J. & Duncan, J.S. (eds.) *Writing Worlds*, London, Routledge, p.7

⁴³ Duncan, J. & Duncan, N. (1988) ‘(Re)reading Landscape’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 6, 117-126, (p.118)

for instance, but rather all things are complex hybrids of both.⁴⁴ If there is stability to be factored into the equation, then it is in the structure of text itself. The words might be considered a frame into and from which ways of knowing flow. Knowledge and ways of knowing the structure of the text are given out and taken in. This realization boils down to consideration in both the private sense of human and land and the wider public sense of landscapes exchanged between individuals in a sort of knowledge transfer.⁴⁵ Again, as argued by Thrift⁴⁶, the text is less *as* landscape than it *is* landscape. A realization of landscape that is text helps to encapsulate the idea of action implied by the verb. Knowledge may be transferred in a process that ultimately renders the writer and reader anonymous in the end product, standing as it does a representation of the process. The instability of meaning brought about by tension or friction between elements in the relationship mean that the product of a representation is never fixed but is instead temporary and imperfect. The impossibility of perfection means that the representation or the product, like the process, can never be absolutely stable and fixed. There is the form or a perfect abstract and there is the imperfect manner of its practice.

One way of exploring this idea of a landscape that is text is to consider methodological implications for its enactment. Thus, for example, as Said approached Conrad, he did not do so solely on the basis of his novels but also through his letters and communicated correspondences.⁴⁷ With Said the novels of Joseph Conrad cannot be taken in a vacuum; rather they must be contextualised by his letters in order to explore a sense of consciousness. The same may be said of landscape. Landscapes do not materialise out of thin air but are rather crafted by individuals who are part of communicative networks. Landscapes emerge in the context of synthesis, a synthesis that is continually unfurling in living experience. It is necessary then to consider a means of accessing the idea of experience on a conceptual or philosophical level.

⁴⁴ E.g. Latour, B. (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern*, London, Harvester Wheatsheaf; Haraway, D. (1991) *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, London, Routledge.

⁴⁵ E.g. Lorimer, H. (2003) 'Telling Small Stories: Spaces of Knowledge and the Practice of Geography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, vol. 28(2), pp. 197-217, (pp.208-210).

⁴⁶ E.g. Thrift, N. (1996) *Spatial Formations*, London, Sage, p.4

⁴⁷ Said, E. (1966) *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, New York: Columbia University Press.

1.4 Said's Phenomenological method and its geographical application

Firstly, it is necessary to consider how we might approach the idea of experience relating to contextualisation. Once this is established, it is necessary to consider the routes this philosophical approach will afford us. Finally, with a way reasoned, it will be necessary to explore the implications of that way more comprehensively. This will be followed up in the next section. Said's study utilises a phenomenological methodology. Let us then consider the implications of this methodology for this thesis, then let us consider the various options a phenomenological approach affords and then let us reason the best approach for the fulfilment of this thesis' aims which are to identify landscape as a relationship, to explore the mechanics of that relationship and in a cognate move, to reconcile ideas of theory and practice into a functioning entity that we might know as landscape.

The concern mainly is to identify a way of contextualising aspects of such a relationship with each other. For example, human may be viewed in the context of land and vice-versa. On a pluralised level, human may be contextualised with other humans and lands. As well as this, there is a temporal factor as contemporary may be contextualised with historical. Said's study of Conrad accomplishes this contextualisation through a phenomenological methodology which this project aims to draw upon. The method encompasses the meaning, values and purpose of the human consciousness in a broader sense of functioning than a simply personal, dominantly subjective manner.⁴⁸ Not only does it lead us to understanding ideas of intersubjectivity, but by Said's examination of Conrad's letters in conjunction with his novel *Heart of Darkness*, we can see the potential for subjectivity of the self, an accretion of experience through a life lived which feeds into ideas of consciousness. This then enables us as geographers to understand the role of experience in terms of intersecting public and private spheres. At the point of intersection then, landscape realities, values and meanings are created. These realities, values and meanings solidify and articulate the relationship between human and land through a communicated sense of environment.

⁴⁸ ibid. See also Said, E.W., Bayoumi, M & Rubin, A. (2000) *The Edward Said Reader*, London, Granta, pp.3-14.

In other words, landscape grows out of an environmental collective of both human and land and as a result, crafting a consciousness that goes beyond either of human or land in isolation.

Conceptualising the essence of this idea, Said lays out the philosophical terms of his method plainly enough. “This study attempts a phenomenological exploration of Conrad’s consciousness, so that the kind of mind he had, both in its distinction and energy will become apparent.”⁴⁹ In essence the subject under study is not Conrad or Conrad’s books, but rather his consciousness. So it will be with this study. The emphasis will not be on any particular author or human nor will it be on land or landscape as understood in the material sense. It will be focused on the consciousness that goes into making the relationship between human and land. Thus we may understand landscape as a collective sensation of human and land. Approaching this with a phenomenological understanding is useful for the following reasons:

For the phenomenologist, consciousness, the perceived world, is the primary reality: it denies reality in absolute, objective terms seeing it as malleable through the lenses of perception. This contributes to an idea of landscape in the sense of a consciousness that is not fixed but central to change through activity that is performed through human and land rather than from a single lens of perception.

Phenomenological criticism is not about either the work or the life, but about the connection between them, in the artist's perception of reality. The idea of connection helps to disseminate performance and activity through human and land. The idea of consciousness opens up an understanding through a sense of relationship that is based on multiple means of connection.

Phenomenology rejects scientific and quantitative methods in favour of understanding or appreciation, seeing experience as an essential part of reality, while arguing that the external world does not consist of objects that can be observed and measured objectively. In other words, crafting an understanding or appreciation of

⁴⁹ Said (1966) op cit. pp. 7-8.

symbiosis helps to overcome dualisms between subject and object. This leads us to the concept of the lifeworld which seeks to capture the totality of a person's involvement with the places and environments experienced in everyday life.⁵⁰

However with the idea of the lifeworld there remains the implied assumption that this sense of dwelling and being is always the case. One must wonder whether there is the possibility of existence or developing existence beyond the structure of being in a lifeworld. Can one focus on a human-centred subjective approach if there is an element beyond human control expressed perhaps through distance or a feeling of externality, as though land was 'there' and thus at an objective remove? We should thus retain a semblance of objectivity in the consciousness of landscape to convey a sense of externality to place in order to nurture a sense of how place works as part of a larger process. If the human can approach the idea of landscape subjectively as well as objectively and there is no right or wrong approach, then if we are to progress we must maintain elements of both subject and object in a manner that disintegrates dualisms by a mutually produced process rather than a singular rejection of either one. Reconciling tensions and paradoxes in an idea of landscape should be concerned with a sense of balance.

By interpreting landscape in poetry for instance, this study will uncover the articulation of key landscape values, meanings and purposes through a landscape consciousness in text that considers landscape the text itself and thus a symbiotic process that shares activity.

A phenomenological geography directs its attention to the essential nature of human dwelling on earth, enabling us to ask what the nature of human experience is in a geographical world.⁵¹ Extending this idea let us explore experience as a collective of human and land. In other words let us explore an earth writing that is expressed by a

⁵⁰ Buttimer, A. (1976) 'Grasping the Dynamism of the Lifeworld', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66, 277-92 illustrating the phenomenological method in practice as a geographical aid, particularly evident considering Buttimer's earlier work, the most illustrative example being Buttimer, A. (1974) 'Values in geography', *AAAG Commission on College Geography*, 24, 1-58.

⁵¹ See Hubbard, P. et al. (2002) *Thinking Geographically*, New York, Continuum, p. 37ff; also Seamon, D. (1979) *A Geography of the Lifeworld*, London, Croom Helm.

sense of landscape that is understood in terms of a relationship not only between human and land but also between ideas of being and becoming. It is a way of looking at an entity that considers a coming together of disparate or apparently contrasting elements such as solidity and fluidity in a singular higher concept that we may understand as landscape.

A useful phenomenological approach in evolving the parameters of relationality is through the way people exist in relation to their world of subjectivity and objectivity. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger⁵² argued that, in conventional philosophy and psychology, the relationship between person and world has been reduced to either an idealist or realist perspective. This is derived from the Husserlian view that we should develop a truly critical outlook; we should examine our own thought processes and assumptions about particular phenomena incisively, and learn to identify and make explicit the many different ways in which the same 'facts' of the 'objective' world can be viewed, essentially creating a consciousness of the lived-in world.⁵³

In an idealist view, the world is a function of a person who acts on the world through consciousness and, therefore, actively knows and shapes his or her world. In contrast, a realist view sees the person as a function of the world in that the world acts on the person and he or she reacts. Heidegger claimed that both perspectives do not properly grasp the nature of human life because they assume a separation and directional relationship between person and world that does not exist in the world of actual lived experience. Instead, Heidegger argued that people do not exist apart from the world but, rather, both are intimately integrated. This is what Heidegger called *Dasein*, or being in the world. Neither makes the other but both exist always together and can only be properly interpreted in terms of this holistic relationship.⁵⁴

⁵² Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and Time*, Oxford, Blackwell.

⁵³ See Husserl, E. (1958) *Ideas*, London, George Allen & Unwin. Heidegger's concept of dwelling or *dasein* builds upon this premise in examining the nature between subject and object and Said's (1966) study of Conrad's consciousness stems similarly from the initial Husserlian premise. See Basso, K. (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press: "... the concept of dwelling assigns importance to the forms of consciousness with which individuals perceive and apprehend geographic space." p.106.

⁵⁴ Seamon, D. (ed.) (1993) *Dwelling, Seeing and Building: Toward a Phenomenological Ecology*, New York, SUNY Press. See also Relph, E. (1981) 'Phenomenology' in Harvey, M. E., & Holly, B.P. (eds.) *Themes in*

As such, phenomenology can supplant the idealist and realist divisions between person and world with a conception in which the two are indivisible in essence, a person-world whole that is one rather than two. A major phenomenological challenge is to describe this person-world intimacy in a way that legitimately escapes any subject-object dichotomy. This idea of being in the world introduces this challenge in the sense that the idea of 'being' perpetuates an idea of rootedness or stillness that does not incorporate the full potential of landscape consciousness. For developing landscape it is useful in the sense of an idea of singularity out of duality but landscape is a living, changing thing and there must be some way to account for this motion. Dealing with and resolving this challenge is accepting tension and paradox as positive rather than negative and something to be embraced and developed rather than something to find a way around. This involves considering landscape as 'movement' as well as 'substance', a malleable and constantly 'becoming' entity that forms and is formed by lived experience and sociability to be expressed and embodied in articulated activity. In landscape there is a need to reconcile ideas of being and becoming so we can understand landscape as a relationship that can theoretically overcome dualisms. On the flip-side however there is also need for a practical understanding of how we might approach and achieve this idea of landscape.

The coming-to-be of humanistic geography reflected the importance of interpretive or hermeneutic methods in geography and as Cresswell notes "[h]umanistic geography's most important reminder has been that we do not live in an abstract framework of geometric spatial relationships; we live in a world of meaning."⁵⁵ Humanistic philosophies like existentialism and phenomenology primarily advocate qualitative methodologies ahead of quantitative methodologies. This is because qualitative approaches enable an articulation of feelings, meanings and values that may be associated with particular places. One of the problems for us in developing a landscape consciousness is this idea of particularity and specificity of place. Does the idea of articulation as something changing in tandem with changing feelings and experiences ally to its best possible potential with the rootedness of place? Perhaps understanding

Geographical Thought, London, Croom Helm.

⁵⁵ Cresswell, T. (1996) 'Geography, Ideology and Ontology: A Relational Transgression' in Cresswell, T. *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression*, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, pp. 11-29 (p.13).

the expression of experience through changing landscape might realize the potential of living feelings, meanings and values in a more complete sense. If place is understood as something rooted and specific, as it is in this thesis, then perhaps landscape as a process can influence the creation of place by a locally specific concentration.

Rather than being concerned with any absolute idea of 'truth' regarding such articulations, the emphasis here is instead on using these to create representations of worldviews and engagements. In addition to representation there is engagement. This pushes towards more performative or non-representational aspects. These processes are not done to the landscape, in the sense of landscape as some separate objective entity or a distinct representation. They are performative in the sense of landscape understood as an organic relationship between human and land. This performance then feels its way into a product. The relationship is the performance of creativity and the creation is a landscape representation, something that stands for the relationship in appearance.

There is something of a tension between ideas of fixity as denoted by the objective sense of landscape as representation and fluidity as denoted by the idea of a continually developing relationship as performance. If place for example may be understood as a representation, then landscape can create place, with place being a particular landscape representation. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of this is in the naming of places, the language of a relationship that creates 'something' out of 'anything' blank spaces.⁵⁶ Thus we might argue that understanding place helps understand a way of landscaping.⁵⁷ A question worth dealing with is that of the difference between an objective landscape and place. The static and fixed landscape may be considered quite similar to the rooted and specific place. The difference is one that may be encapsulated in visibility. While the rooted and specific place is visible and knowable, the objective and static landscape is not visible to the same extent. The face of landscape as it were, is its process. Underlying that process and the differences of its manifestation is a semblance of universality or sameness. There is a commonality threading together

⁵⁶ See Tilley, C. (1994) *A Phenomenology of landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments*, Oxford, OUP. Interacting with landscape in this manner transforms what is material and physical into something that is known and historically and socially experienced, pp.18-19.

⁵⁷ Cf. Cresswell, T. (2004) *Place: A Short Introduction*, Malden MA, Blackwell, pp.10-11.

different landscapes. This universality or sameness may be considered the perfect form, the perfect unattainable form, of an ongoing process that can never find an ultimate end. A pure, ultimate universality is unattainable. The form is there but since no one can say whether a particular landscape is the ultimate landscape at the expense of another with any absolute authority, the form proves itself ultimately elusive. There is the form and there are the manners of its realization. In this respect we can approach landscape with something of a recursive understanding that is ultimately based on the depth of, or the quality of, language. This is accessible through the potential energy created by a word's inherent ambiguity.

1.5 Qualitative methods in phenomenology

As our idea of landscape develops we can see that an idea of shaping through experiences, meanings and values that is generated by a human-land unity is integral to a process of landscape. On the other hand, a sense of objectivity is integral to any structure that might prevent this process from evaporating. In order to explore the idea of tangible process further, let us consider some ideas of qualitative methodology through a phenomenological approach.⁵⁸ This approach helps to develop the idea of landscape as collective of human and land through the idea of lifeworld and also conceives of appearances or phenomena that are not absolute but changeable. Qualitative methods are concerned at the fundamental level with how the geographical world is viewed, experienced, rendered and represented by social actors, providing access to landscape realities, values, meanings and purposes. Recent developments in non-representational and affective geographies ultimately derived from a phenomenological understanding, engage with how these qualitative methods are developed in a performative sense, mindful of structure and representation. Non-representational theory does not as Wylie notes, equate to anti-representational theory but rather explores new approaches to things like representation and practice, human

⁵⁸ E.g. Pickles, J. (1988) 'From Fact to Lifeworld' in Eyles, J., & Smith, D. M. (eds.) *Qualitative methods in Human Geography*, Cambridge, Polity Press, pp. 233-54; Johnston, R.J. et al, (2000), *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford: Blackwell, p.607. See also Rehorick, D.A. (1991) 'Pickling Human Geography: The Souring of Phenomenology in the Human Sciences', *Human Studies*, 14, 359-369.

and land or culture and nature.⁵⁹ In striving for a balance or looking to landscape as a relationship in which such things as representation and practice or culture and nature find balance, this thesis seeks to reveal how form and manner might relate or highlights the fact that they can relate, as facilitated by this approach to landscape. The purpose of methodological consideration is to explore how we might balance structural form and ongoing processual manner. After Rose, the direction of this process is inward in the sense that human and land develop a closeness and the development of that closeness is traceable in communication⁶⁰, the way in which language and a particular use of language percolates down into an articulation, from which a new beginning creates a new expression. In a broadly phenomenological, affective, manner such methods may be broken down into three sections.⁶¹

- In-depth open ended interviews with individuals and groups
- Direct engagements with subjects and their lifeworld through participant observation and related ethnographic techniques which may be implemented by individuals or teams.
- Interpretations of a variety of texts, including landscapes, archival materials, diaries, letters, reports, maps and other visual images as well as literature.

It is this last method that is most closely related to this study. In light of this we can distil our approach further to the area of hermeneutic-phenomenological research with the goal of understanding and developing a working concept of landscape consciousness through interpreting the articulated landscape texts of others, thereby underlining the importance of community in the ongoing making of landscape. There is the individual and there is the individual's place in a wider collective. Articulated texts are interpreted and these interpretations form the basis of new articulations.

⁵⁹ Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, p.164

⁶⁰ Cf. Rose, M. (2002) 'The Seductions of Resistance: Power, Politics, and a performative style of systems', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 20, 4, 383-400 also Rose, M. (2004) 'Re-embracing Metaphysics', *Environment and Planning A*, 36, 461-468.

⁶¹ See Wylie, J. (2007) 'Landscape Phenomenology' in *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.139-187.

As Seamon explains, hermeneutics is the theory and practice of interpretation.⁶² The key point for this research is that the creator of the text is not typically available to comment on its making or significance, thus the hermeneutic researcher must find ways to uncover meanings through the text itself.⁶³ This benefits a landscape approach in the sense that one has the textual product of landscape in the text without the addition of a creator's commentary. Thus the text is given a broader interpretive space, a reading of a text produced by a relationship. This is emblematic of a collective landscape experience rather than an exclusively human experience. If we think about it the human experience insofar as it may be termed such, does not really exist since all human activity is carried out together with or conducted through space. In the singularity of the term with the implication of unified elements, landscape is an effective interpretation of this relationship. The interpretive or hermeneutic process is aptly described as follows through referral to ideas of embeddedness, involvement, interrelationships and objects speaking their own story thereby divesting them of objective status or an implied sense of division from a subject.

One embeds oneself in the process of getting involved in the text, one begins to discern configurations of meaning, of parts and wholes and their interrelationships, one receives certain messages and glimpses of an unfolding development that beckons to be articulated and related to the total fabric of meaning. The hermeneutic approach seems to palpate its object and to make room for that object to reveal itself to our gaze and ears, to speak its own story into our understanding.⁶⁴

This hermeneutic or interpretive aspect of the phenomenological method is useful in enabling a relative sense of landscape for the researcher and a point of communicative access in the landscape text. Considering this idea in a context of geographical heritage⁶⁵

⁶² See Seamon, D. (2000) 'A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology in Environment-Behavior Research' in Wapner, S., Demick, J., Yamamoto, T. and Minami, H. (eds.) *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behavior Research* New York, Plenum, pp. 157-78. See also Mugerauer, R. (1994). *Interpretations on behalf of Place: Environmental Displacements and Alternative Responses*, New York, SUNY Press, p.4.

⁶³ See Duncan, J. & Ley, D. (1993) 'Introduction: Representing the place of Culture' in Duncan, J. & Ley, D. (eds.) *Place/Culture/Representation*, London, Routledge, pp.1-20.

⁶⁴ Von Eckartsberg, R. (1998) 'Existential-phenomenological research', in Valle, R. (ed.) *Phenomenological inquiry in psychology*, New York, Plenum, pp.21-61.

⁶⁵ Perhaps the most obvious companion for Tuan's work in the application of the phenomenological method and investigating its relevance in the geographical context would be Relph's, e.g. Relph, E. (1970) 'An Inquiry into the Relations between Phenomenology and Geography', *Canadian Geographer*, 14, 193-20 and Relph, E., (1976) *Place and Placelessness*, London, Pion. See Cresswell, T. (2002) 'Place and A Sedentarist Metaphysics' in Cresswell, T. & Verstraete, G (eds.) *Mobilizing Place, Placing Mobilities*, Amsterdam, Rodopi,

and specifically the humanistic context, we might reflect on the work of Yi-Fu Tuan.⁶⁶ Tuan, in the application of phenomenological ideas, though not considering himself a phenomenologist in the strictest sense, considered geography as a mirror of humanity⁶⁷ as he broadly argued, in echoes of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, that to know the world was to know oneself.

Developing this idea is integral to our understanding of landscape as a generation of a collective self. If in Sauerian style we let geography equate to landscape, then landscape is less a mirror of humanity than humanity is a part of landscape. In this understanding or interpretation is an idea of synthesis. The elements, if we may term them such, of human and land come together to form a collective sense in landscape. Humanity is not a mirror of landscape nor is landscape a mirror of humanity but rather humanity or the presence of humanity is already implied in the idea of landscape. If there is a mirror of humanity at all then that mirror is land rather than landscape. This interpretation grows from Tuan's idea of synthesis. Acknowledging how society and environment are intrinsically and inseparably bound together, Tuan writes: "The model for the regional geographers of a humanist leaning is the Victorian novelist who strives to achieve a synthesis of the subjective and the objective."⁶⁸ For Tuan, this is the embodiment of humanistic geography.⁶⁹

In our case the synthesis is between human and land, land in the sense of an apportioned space but without the implications of a known place. Given the vitality of influence, interaction and communication of both, it borders on the implausible to define human or land in terms of subject and object as this implies a division or a boundary that is not really

pp.12-18 Consider also Buttimer (1974; 1976). See also Hubbard et al. (2002) *Thinking Geographically*, New York, Continuum, p.38.

⁶⁶ E.g. Tuan, Y.F. (1971) 'Geography, phenomenology and the study of human nature', *Canadian Geographer* 15, 181-92.

⁶⁷ Tuan, Y.F. (1971) *Man and Nature*, Washington, Association of American Geographers, Commission on College Geography. See also Tuan, Y. F., (1989) *Morality and Imagination: Paradoxes of Progress* Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, p.68ff.

⁶⁸ Tuan, Y. F. (1978) *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. To further illustrate this we might consider Tuan's statement that "Landscape... is not to be defined by itemizing its parts. The parts are subsidiary clues to an integrated image. Landscape is such an image, a construct of the mind and of feeling" p.204. Tuan, Y.F. (1979) 'Thought and landscape' in Meinig, D.W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary landscapes*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.89-102.

⁶⁹ Holt-Jensen, A. & Fullerton, B. (1999) *Geography, History and Concepts: A Student's Guide*, London, Sage, p.95.

there in landscape. Nonetheless the idea of synthesis in principle is valuable and goes some way to negating the boundary imposed by the subject-object dichotomy. It is perhaps this work's most significant deviation from traditional phenomenological principle to conceive of a continuous sense of time and change characterised by a sense of 'becoming' in contrast to the more traditional phenomenological emphasis on 'being'. This idea of 'becoming' is illustrated by Deleuze and Guattari.⁷⁰ The emphasis developed in this work is reconciling what might be called an idea of *Becoming and Time* with *Being and Time*. As the work progresses to explore landscape more fully the idea evolves into a synthesis of being and becoming in a singular landscape concept. This involves an elision of a traditional Cartesian body that posits dualities like subject and object. This approach is perhaps most effectively realised through Merleau-Ponty's thesis of reversibility. For Merleau-Ponty, reversibility contends that the body is always both subject and object. Wylie discusses with clarity the idea of one hand (the subject or toucher) coming into contact with another hand (the object or touched). At the moment of contact, it is impossible to distinguish which is which.⁷¹ Such an understanding helps in conceptualising a landscape consciousness that transcends Cartesian bodies.

The goal of this study is to develop a world of landscape embodiment, its activity, change and conceptual rootedness to understand landscape behaviour through a theory that avoids rigidity or constraint.⁷² The goal will be to identify a concept of landscape that embodies sameness and difference in singularity. This idea of sameness and difference is broached by Lorimer, arguing that "[t]he footwork and field trudge may remain the same but the manner in which landscape is approached and expressed can be retuned to shifting, sentient encounters, to fuse material and mental landscapes, and to telescope down to share in the spatiality of individual lives lived."⁷³ In this manner the work is concerned with developing an understanding towards a knowledge of landscape

⁷⁰ See Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1994) *What is Philosophy?* London, Verso, p.178.

⁷¹ Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, p.151. On the hermeneutic place in a phenomenological approach to objectivity, Duncan & Ley (1993) encapsulate it by stating "In the slogan of the phenomenologists, every object of knowledge is an object for a subject." p.8. See also Hetherington, K. (2003) 'Spatial Textures: Place, Touch and *Praesentia*', *Environment and Planning A*, 35, 1933-1944.

⁷² Kitchin, R. & Tate, N. (2000) 'Thinking about research' in Kitchin, R. & Tate, N. (2000) *Conducting Research in Human Geography: Theory, Methodology and Practice*, Essex, Pearson, pp. 1-27, esp. pp.10-12.

⁷³ Lorimer, H. (2006) 'Herding Memories of Humans and Animals', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24, 497-518, (p.516).

consciousness as a concept and how it can be sought, interpreted and discussed. One way of accessing this is through relating conceptual and practical dwelling in a singular flowing entity that can at the same time be rooted in some abstract sense. A phenomenological approach provides useful coordinates for such a challenge.⁷⁴

For a critique of the phenomenological method, Pickles is perhaps the most comprehensive source.⁷⁵ Pickles claims that phenomenology has become radical and naively subjective. Phenomenology, in accepting multiple worldviews, is unable to develop good methods or acceptable criteria for evaluation. As well as this he considers the ‘taking-for-grantedness’ of the world of the subject but not the researcher claiming that “they want to prey and prick at the life of the housing project resident, to listen to the stories of the elderly, to crawl beneath the skin of the alcoholic, but express no interest whatsoever in exposing to the excruciating scrutiny of the wondering world the ways of the graduate student and the college professor.”⁷⁶ These criticisms are somewhat valid. The humanistic phenomenological method can potentially be overly concerned with subjectivity to its own detriment. This concern can lead to an intangible multiplicity without an element of objectivity where parameters cannot be drawn for interpretive research. However this carries the danger of contradiction in espousing ideas of lifeworld and embeddedness while treating the world as ‘there’ for interpretation.

This presents opportunity in the sense that the researcher can conceivably become the ‘subject’ or more accurately involve oneself in the process and product of landscape. Thus interpretation may not be considered an end in itself but rather coordination to a further realm of articulation in which the researcher/subject may communicate with “the wondering world” autobiographically.⁷⁷ In realizing this it is important that this articulation not be human-centred but rather an expression of

⁷⁴ See Wylie, J. (2007) p.6 and also Tilley, C. (2004) *The Materiality of Stone: Explorations in Landscape Phenomenology*, Oxford, Berg.

⁷⁵ Pickles, J. (1985) *Phenomenology, Science and Geography: Spatiality and the Human Sciences*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

⁷⁶ Pickles (1985) op. cit. p.68.

⁷⁷ E.g. Buttimer, A. (1993) ‘Life journeys in the Practice of Geography’ in Buttimer, A. *Geography and the Human Spirit*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, pp.11-35 (p.11).

landscape consciousness that is indicated through the use of “I”. “I” thus is distinguished as a collective landscape self rather than a human individual self.

Beyond this work however, as a response to his own criticisms, Pickles⁷⁸ sees two arguments commonly used to defend the claim that the world of experience and the subjective view can be placed next to objectivities of other geographers. The first argument is used by Relph and states that scientific and personal geographies come from the same root and are therefore of the same validity.⁷⁹ The second argument is used by Buttimer.⁸⁰ She recognises the validity of both subjective and objective approaches, by claiming that there are objective conditions but also subjective values and meanings.⁸¹ The focus of this research will acknowledge the existence of both, but examine the connectivity or relationship between them rather than either subject or object in itself. Synthesis is required. Objectivity and subjectivity by virtue of tension produce landscape as ongoing process and stable unity.

Some criticisms discussed by Wylie involve phenomenology as romantic, nostalgic and overly concerned with the individual at the expense of critical assessment of social, political and economic conditions.⁸² Initially, it was figured that one of the challenges facing this work would be to avoid a nostalgic or romantic tint at all costs but this would remove a constituent element of landscaping. Emotional responses in landscaping are sometimes, but by no means most often, influenced by a nostalgic or romantic disposition. In fact if we consider landscape as impermanent and ever-changing then a nostalgic engagement is perhaps at some point inevitable.⁸³ It can be the way land thinks itself into human.⁸⁴ These engaged responses are produced by a symbiosis of human and land in which Cartesian ideologies such as subject and object or domination of land or human over each other are quite redundant. All things

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.70ff.

⁷⁹ See Peet, M. (1998) *Modern Geographical Thought*, Oxford, Blackwell, p. 48

⁸⁰ E.g. Buttimer, A. (1974) ‘Values in geography’, *AAG Commission on College Geography*, 24, 1-58.

⁸¹ Ibid. p.38.

⁸² Wylie, J. (2007) ‘Critiques of Landscape Phenomenology’ in *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.180-185.

⁸³ E.g. for the idea of a continuing relationship between nostalgia and identity see Wilson, J.L. (2005) *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning*, New Jersey, Associated University Presses. Cf. Gibbons, L. (2002) ‘Nostalgia and National Romance’ in *The Quiet Man*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.40-66

⁸⁴ Cf. Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962) ‘Sense Experience’ in *Phenomenology of Perception*, London, Routledge, pp.240-282, p.249.

coalesce in landscape if we allow it the freedom to both move and stand still through time and experience.

This is somewhat related to the second criticism that social, political and economic circumstances elude critical engagement. In the sense that an approach such as this does not engage specifically with social, political and economic circumstances, this is correct. Categories such as these are variable and changing from one landscape to another. Not only this but compartmentalising these categories is an insufficient, restrictive and constraining way of analysing landscape. These categories are not mutually exclusive and each influences the other. The essential way in which this influence is manifest is in sociability, communication and language⁸⁵ through which social, political, economic and cultural circumstances flow into and out of each other between human and land and among wider communities. Developing a landscape idea in an abstract, universal sense should not be directly concerned with distinguishing specific details and circumstances, be they cultural, economic, political or social. The aim of a landscape consciousness is to find a sense of commonality among all such circumstances so that they are all capable of involvement in the process and production of landscape.

The core concept of this work is landscape as form and landscaping as the visible manner of the form. Part of the continual renewal of landscape and part of the reason it is so elusive as a term, is because of continually changing social, cultural, economic and political circumstances. In the evolution of landscape, such considerations are simply that: circumstantial. They are interwoven in time and experience. Creating space for the movement of these elements in landscaping is a pertinent issue. Thus, as we develop a landscape consciousness we shall recognise these elements in the broader scheme of time and experience. Thus one can approach the dynamic of landscape consciousness with, if one wishes for example, a critical, feminist, Marxist or radical engagement since these elements in part or whole may constitute the manner in which one landscapes in the sense of active verb.

⁸⁵ Cf. Bourdieu on the social intersubjectivity of the individual in the context of habitus. Bourdieu, P (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See also Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, London, Routledge.

The aim of this work is not to engage critically with any approach in particular but rather to develop a dynamic in which one can bring distinctive critical or geographical judgements to bear through how they landscape or the manner of their landscaping. It is not the purpose of this work to engage with a Marxist approach, to take a hypothetical example, since particular approaches are inherent in the differences of everyday reality. The concern is with what abstract concept such approaches are attempting at. The idea at the centre of this approach is development of a concept that allows democratic expression of all thought, schools, values and credences through the medium of landscape. Each approach is a valid attempt at a landscape ideal. These expressions are constructed, deconstructed, renewed and transformed in everyday conditions of cyclical landscape consciousness. In landscape there is no right or wrong way of doing it. If there is no definitive right or wrong way of doing landscape, then the question is how we can identify what landscape is. In this respect a fixed representational form may be explored as a means of offsetting an imbalance towards fluid uncertainty. It is worthwhile at this point to explore some ways cultural geography has tried to come to terms with landscape as a concept and how we might learn from these approaches in the development of a workable landscape concept that relates form to manner.

1.6 Cultural geography and landscapes

In approaching this let us consider the cultural or rather ‘new’ cultural geographical understanding of what landscape means. As Jackson notes, “much of the ‘new’ cultural geography remains wedded to the idea of landscape”.⁸⁶ What Winchester et al. term ‘new’ cultural geography uses an interpretive approach that recognises cultural landscapes as interpreted in different ways by people.⁸⁷ Presumably, by this understanding then, we are to associate the changing and differing character of landscape with the activity of people. This approach emerges particularly in affective and non-representational geographies and a performative, fluid, process. In addition to

⁸⁶ Jackson, P. (1989) *Maps of Meaning*, London, Routledge, p.1.

⁸⁷ Winchester, H., Kong, L. & Dunn, K. (2003) ‘Changing Geographical Approaches to Cultural landscapes’ in *Landscapes: Ways of Imagining the World*, Essex, Pearson Education, pp. 10-34.

process it is worth retaining the idea of ‘the’ landscape as an objectified entity. In this thesis the movement is towards representation as form and performance as manner. It is worth considering the role of land in the changing and differing ways of landscape performance as well as in the rooted and objective stasis of the concept’s representation since each may illuminate the other and make landscape more coherently knowable. It is possible that landscape is created somewhere in the space between performance and representation as a product of their relationship. The aim is to explore how performance and representation might interact. One way of coming to terms with this approach is through the idea of scope. This thesis aims at expanding the scope of landscape to include ideas of performance and representation in a singular collective. Scope has broader implications that are encapsulated by Cosgrove and Jackson. Winchester et al. quote their exposition of this type of scope in “new” cultural geography.

If we are to define this ‘new’ cultural geography it would be contemporary as well as historical (but always contextual and theoretically informed); social as well as spatial (but not confined exclusively to narrowly defined landscape issues); urban as well as rural; and interested in the contingent nature of culture, in dominant ideologies and in forms of resistance to them.⁸⁸

The key concept here seems to be the notion of scope and relating the elements of that scope, particularly notable in an idea of the nature of culture, in an effort at unconfinement in cultural geography. This is juxtaposed perhaps unknowingly, with a sense of permanence in the use of ‘always’. This illustrates that meanings associated with a landscape are somewhat paradoxically, permanently unstable, diffuse and multiplicitous.⁸⁹ It very nearly appears as though there are a set of rules made to underline that there are no rules. Cultural geography conceived of thus posits a set of inclusive dichotomies (e.g. “as well as”) which cater for the broadness of culture by encompassing ‘x’ as well as ‘y’. Developing a workable solution, a way in which

⁸⁸ Cosgrove, D. & Jackson, P., (1987) ‘New Directions in cultural geography’, *Area*, 19, 95-101 (p.95). Cf. Winchester, H., Kong, L. & Dunn, K., (2003) op cit. p.22.

⁸⁹ Winchester, H. et al. (2003) op cit. pp.22-32; cf. p.28, quoted from Winchester (1992) p.140. ‘Each person or group views, uses and constructs the same landscape in different ways; these are neither ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but rather are part of the many layers of meaning within one landscape’ While it might be the case they are neither right nor wrong, there is still the need to uncover a sense of truth in the landscape. This project will explore the concept of truth in order to elucidate a more complete and tangible sense of meaning for the landscape and the human.

landscape can be known, understood and explored by means of its innate paradoxical tensions is a way of exploring the idea of scope. By exploring the relationships and paradoxical connections and tensions this study aims to embody as a core value, the fullness of a symbiotic synthesis. From an equitable geographical standing let us not consider geography as a science of synthesis of other subjects⁹⁰, but rather as a synthesis of the most fundamental geographical entities in human and land. In other words, as well as broadening the scope outward we can also broaden it inwards to unlock the potential way of understanding landscape and thus implicitly, geography as a whole. Shaping land is often the same as earth writing.⁹¹

While the ‘new’ cultural geography goes some way to extend what is now viewed as the traditional cultural geography of Sauer and the Berkeley school⁹², it can still be extended further through new philosophical and linguistic avenues to access the relationship itself by means of productive tensions and paradoxes rather than destructive dichotomies based on fundamental divisions.⁹³ This expression of a relationship is, in short what defines landscape as relationship of human and land. Its

⁹⁰ Cf. Fenneman’s (1919) diagram on the circumference of geography in Holt-Jensen, A & Fullerton, B. (1999) *Geography, History and Concepts*, London, Sage Publications, p.3.

⁹¹ See Barnes, T. & Duncan, J. (1992) *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Texts and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, London, Routledge. They write that “very little attention is paid to writing in human geography. This is ironic, given that the very root meaning of the word ‘geography’ is literally, ‘earth writing’ from the Greek *geo* meaning ‘earth’ and *graphein*, meaning ‘to write’”. p.1. A related definition of *graphein* is ‘to scratch’. We can talk of scratching the earth or making scratchings in the earth, the essential character thus of both geography and landscape.

⁹² Cf. Rowntree, L.B. (1988) ‘Orthodoxy and new directions: cultural/humanistic geography’, *Progress in Human Geography*, 12, (4), 575-86. Rowntree rightly warns against dichotomising old and new cultural geography, considering it a generalisation that ignored the theoretical, methodological and empirical breadth of the Berkeley school of cultural geography; see also Winchester, Kong & Dunn (2003) p.22. There is a sense that dichotomising ideas of ‘old’ and ‘new’ cultural geography is a scorning of the steps by which a ‘new’ cultural geography did ascend. The ‘new’ cultural geography represents a progression in the sense that its boundaries for empirical enquiry are more fluid and less rigid perhaps than the Berkleian concept, taking into account wider social, economic and political structures of society but the ethnographic and fieldwork tradition of the old should not be undervalued both on its own merit and as a foundation for the new since *ex nihilo nihil fit*. This idea of progression may also be applied to the idea of landscape more specifically as we might ask what landscape has come from. What concepts or ideals has landscape developed out of?

⁹³ In this way the study aims to avoid the potential constraints imposed by dualisms and binaries that comprise broad strokes. There is a tendency in such a tradition to emphasize what seems logical according to the laying down of large pre-existing structures, risking a loss of what the communication between human as individual and the landscape through the text actually says in its own logical way. This study approaches from the angle of the relationship since it is not constrained to the same extent by pre-structured dichotomies and dualisms. Logic is necessary but we must ensure that the logic of landscape and its relationships come first.

process and product are derivative of its immanent tensions. Landscape is defined by a coming together of human and land in the activity of landscape.⁹⁴ If landscape is considered thus as a synthesis then let it also be considered a purely geographical rendition if one understands geography as a science of synthesis that looks within itself.

Developing such an idea of synthesis should include nature and culture since these are implied in a sense of subject and object relating to landscape. This idea of synthesis is somewhat similar to Marxist interpretations of nature and culture as produced in a dialectic interaction in which roles of subject and object are interchangeable. However there is some issue with the idea of society separating itself from nature. If culture and nature are integrated to such an extent of interaction and interchangeability, then one might wonder if it is indeed possible for separation to occur since culture and nature may be difficult to explicitly and individually define. In the belief that society disregards the needs of nature, one must wonder by what criteria are the needs of nature known. If they are claimed to be known, then given how nature shapes culture and culture shapes nature, can any such needs be extrapolated with any certain distinction?⁹⁵ In the sense of landscape consciousness developing in this work one should question ascribing a presumptive knowledge to culture and society of a nature by which it is itself defined.

In this regard culture is not so much considered done but rather in a continual process of doing. Culturing is embedded in materiality. The consciousness of the human, drawing from existential psychoanalysis, is such that a subject does not intend a material object but that consciousness is itself intentionality.⁹⁶ Thus the implication is that consciousness has a life of its own separate from the practices that produce it. In this sense the Marxist alliance of material recalcitrance with human self-consciousness differs in that it loses touch with an appreciation of agency within material nature thus

⁹⁴ For a sociological perspective see Latour, B. (1999) *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the reality of Science Studies*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, p.147ff. For a consideration of this perspective in the geographical context see Hinchliffe, S. (2003) 'Inhabiting' – Landscapes and Natures' in Anderson, K. et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, SAGE, pp. 207-225.

⁹⁵ Cf. Smith, N. (1984) *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.31ff.

⁹⁶ E.g. Caruso, I.A. (1964) *Existential Psychology: From Analysis to Synthesis*, London, Dartman, Longman and Todd. Cf. Brooke, R. (ed.) (2000) *Pathways into the Jungian World: Phenomenology and Analytical Psychology*, London, Routledge.

producing divisions which preclude a fuller understanding of culture though it is ironically given precedence.⁹⁷ Dissemination of intentionality throughout subject and object or culture and nature involves ongoing production of consciousness. Activity through communication which produces tension produces landscape that transcends nature and culture distinction.

Putting this idea of difference or categorical transcendence in the broader context of an abstraction, in Cosgrove's *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, the ultimate thrust of the argument is that it was the rise of capitalism as a mode of production which led to the modern concept of landscape.⁹⁸ While this is certainly a reasonable hypothesis and entirely valid to a western world defined to a large extent by capitalism, it is necessary to question the idea of landscape beyond the political or ideological specificity of capitalism, looking to what landscape is beyond the distinctions of particular approaches. That is not to say landscape is not developed politically, but a particular political or cultural ideology offers up a particular landscape.⁹⁹ In contextual terms, the particular understanding of landscape cultivated in a work like *Social Formation and Symbolic Capital* can teach us about the concept of landscape more universally, that is a universality derived from particulars and in a mutual turn, definitive of them. An idea of landscape can help in understanding a capitalist mode of production and vice-versa. Olwig's work on the substantive nature of landscape and the recovery of a real rather than apparent idea points towards a handling of this situation in that a capitalist mode of production is a particular facet of a more general idea of production. In other words capitalism is the appearance of a reality of production. In terms of landscape Olwig's return to an idea of the real rather than the apparent implies that landscape can at some point be both real and apparent.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Anderson, K. et al. (2003) 'A Rough Guide' in Anderson, K. et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, SAGE, pp.1-37 (p.5).

⁹⁸ Cosgrove, D. (1984) 'The Landscape Idea and the Modern World' in *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, London, Croom Helm, pp.254-272.

⁹⁹ Cf. Meinig, D.W. (1979) 'The Beholding Eye: Ten Different Versions of the Same Scene' in Meinig, D.W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.33-51. Landscape may be taken *inter alia* as wealth, problem, system or ideology

¹⁰⁰ Olwig, K. (1996) 'Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86(4), 630-653.

The idea of landscape developed throughout this study challenges the idea of real or apparent with a view to an idea of real *and* apparent. One way of approaching this in method is through challenging a division between nature and culture as with Actor-Network-Theory; instead believing agency to be distributed evenly in such a way that unites nature and culture in a relational way that is, by the friction of that relationship, a way imbued with tension.¹⁰¹ Accessing a workable solution to tension and paradox in landscape, the study will initially take a poststructuralist derived approach through deconstructing language and revising conventional assumptions in terms like ‘nature’, ‘environment’ and ‘landscape’ with a view to then constructing a logical dynamic of consciousness that enables a way of knowing landscape that makes its innate tensions and paradoxes expressively functional as well as theoretically observable. This is something considered by Mitchell and expressed in a move in cultural geography from culture as determined ‘thing’ to culture as diffuse ‘level’. This leads into an assertion by Mitchell that there is no such thing as culture but rather an idea of culture.¹⁰² This approach is tailored to this thesis in the sense of the real and apparent. There is no such thing, in an apparent sense, of landscape but there is an abstract idea of landscape whose form is not visible on any apparent level. In other words, the apparent landscape adheres to a universal idea of landscape. In terms of quantifying this idea of which there is apparently no such thing, the employment of a structural understanding may be worthwhile. The apparent landscape may very well be considered the facet of a structural universality, a form or ideal version of the appearance.

Giddens’ structuration theory helps in this endeavour by combining Marxism and humanism to argue for duality of structure and agency in the sense that structure does not exist under the surface or as separated superstructure such as with Marxism, but is created by and implicated in, each and every human action.¹⁰³ The theory nonetheless retains a persistent dualism in structure and agency that inhibits its ability to function as a collective entity. Nigel Thrift’s application of structuration theory sought to address

¹⁰¹ See n.17 above

¹⁰² Mitchell, D. (1995) ‘There’s no such thing as Culture: Towards a Reconceptualisation of the Idea of Culture in Geography’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 19, 102-116.

¹⁰³ Giddens, A. (1979) *Central problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*, London, Macmillan. Also Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society*, California, University of California Press.

this by reconstituting regional geography in the interactive setting of the locale in order to sew together this duality.¹⁰⁴ However, the emphasis on the region as a basis for social action understates human causal agency through a material regional container. While satisfactory in theorizing the major sites of socialisation processes, it does not satisfactorily embrace the component of human consciousness and thus the nature of a socialisation process. The idea of locale or region as rooted base or site overshadows the character of process. Landscape consciousness on the other hand may be a more suitable expression of a collective embodiment of structure and agency. Its suitability is illustrated by a relationality of being and becoming that allows structure to be implicated in agency and vice-versa through a singular collective concept.

The production of a singular collective concept depends on productive communication between elements of the collective so in *Spatial Divisions of Labour*, Doreen Massey explored the processes of socialisation further:

The fact that processes take place over space, the facts of distance or closeness, of physical variation between areas, of the individual character and meaning of specific places and regions- all these are essential to the operation of social processes themselves. Just as there are no purely spatial processes, neither are there any non-spatial processes.¹⁰⁵

Fundamentally then social processes are necessarily spatial but contained in place. Through socialisation then we can relate ideas of space and place or, in a broader sense, subject and object. Concurrently, no two places are alike and thus spatial differences matter. Place variation is consequently linked to spatially differentiated patterns of production and geographical variation in social structures and class relations. However, local areas rarely bear the marks of only one form of economic structure and degree and the nature of effects of new divisions of labour will depend on existing areal character that is in turn, the product of complex history, containing separate cultural, political and ideological elements. As such this breed of regional geography offers a

¹⁰⁴ Thrift, N. (1983) 'On the determination of social action in space and time', *Society and Space*, 1, 23-57. See also Peet, R. & Thrift, N. (1989) *New Models in Geography: The Political-Economy Perspective: Vol. 1*, London, Routledge, pp.19-22. Peet, R. (1996) 'Structural Themes in Geographical Discourse' in Douglas, I. et al. (eds.) *Companion Encyclopaedia of Geography*, London, Routledge, pp.860-888.

¹⁰⁵ Massey, D. (1984) 'Geography Matters' in Massey, D. (1984) *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*, London, Routledge, pp.49-56; p.51. See also Massey, D. & Allen, J. (1984) (eds.) *Geography Matters! A Reader*, Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press.

means of understanding relations between the general and specific and how local areas fit into wider schemes of capitalist production. Thus Massey's *Spatial Divisions of Labour* provides theoretical inspiration for localities studies projects which are ultimately focused on how different forms of social experience are sedimented in particular places and combine to produce varied outcomes over time.¹⁰⁶ This relates to Matless' ideas on 'cultures of landscape' where the focus is moved from the specificity or particularity even, of place or text to a focus where landscape circulates through these in a more practiced or performative sense.¹⁰⁷ This leads to an investigation into how landscape works rather than what it is, in the way place might be viewed.¹⁰⁸

1.7 Why Landscape and not Place?

Reading into Massey's work, place is clearly an integral feature of understanding social and spatial processes. In its specificity we are left to ask what collective generality might relate to this particularity. As it stands the sense of generality is one of disparate social, political, economic and political processes and effects. If we identify a common generality between these elements then we might have a collective that may be altogether less cumbersome built on close weaving together rather than outstretched links between containers. If we understand landscape as an activity that involves shaping human and land, then we may corral these frayed and disparate elements into a collective explanatory process that relates in its generality to the specificity of place and the specific elemental processes within them. Landscape is continually changing and reproducing itself. This process develops a social experience that involves humans and lands and these experiences can collect and sediment in places. Places and regions emerge through particular ways of landscaping that are spatially consistent.

¹⁰⁶ Massey, D. (1984) *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*, London, Routledge.

¹⁰⁷ Matless, D. (1996) 'New Material? Work in Social and Cultural Geography, 1995', *Progress in Human Geography*, 20(3), 379-392. See also Lorimer, H. (2000) 'Guns, game and the Grandee: The Cultural Politics of Deer-stalking in the Scottish Highlands', *Ecumene*, 7(4), 431-459; Merriman, P. (2005) 'Materiality, subjectification and Government: The Geographies of Britain's Motorway Code', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 23(2), 235-250.

¹⁰⁸ Matless, D. (1998) *Landscape and Englishness*, London, Reaktion. See Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London Routledge, p.116

Massey's argument for the importance of place and place specificity promotes a progressive concept of place that assumes social and cultural heterogeneity within places rather than assimilation to a national or local superstructure. In essence places are materially and imaginatively constructed by different types of people who each lend different dimensions to places. The idea of landscaping broadens our understanding beyond simple spatial difference and the idea that place is simply a human-centred construct. Much can be understood about place as a concept when considered in the context of a process or consciousness of landscape, a term which implicitly carries within it contingencies for the agency of human and material land.¹⁰⁹

While Massey is concerned with the changing social and industrial geography of Britain, this work focuses on either side of Massey's regionally constituted place.¹¹⁰ It dwells upon the changing individual and changing material land whose activity in the landscape process can bring about the creation of place. The difference between this and such work as Massey's is that it explores spatiality through the concept of landscape rather than place. To tease out that distinction further, it is the contention of this study that the development of a dynamic landscape consciousness provides a different way of understanding spatiality involving and thus allowing democratisation through the broadest possible scope for difference, language, thought and material. To access such an idea the study will use a mode of explanation with the aim of recognising processes that can, but not necessarily must, bring about place and regionality. Place is more a characteristic of a particular landscape. Names and talk of place are manifestations of a particular landscape; a sense of place is the communication of a particular sense of a landscape. Employing this mode of explanation based on language and the communication of landscape or its particular character in something like place, language

¹⁰⁹ This is related to the approach of Entrikin, N. (1991) *The Betweenness of Place*, Cambridge, Polity Press who, in an implicit recognition of tension in empirical-analytic and historical-hermeneutic science, understood that place requires access to both an objective and subjective reality. This means that place is best viewed from in between traditional subject-object binaries. The development of a dynamic of landscape consciousness in this work identifies with this problem and aims to deal with it in the context of a landscape process which includes the potential for characterisation in terms of place or placelessness, in the sense that the distinguished container of a particular place may evaporate through a sense of placelessness.

¹¹⁰ See Johnston, R.J. (1991) *A Question of Place: Exploring the Practice of Human Geography*, Oxford, Blackwell, for a regional constitution suffused with philosophical concepts of realism and structuration theory.

and linguistic theory serve as an initial foray into understanding the landscape process which will by implication offer ways of understanding geography as a whole. Human and land express their agency as thought, language and material converge in relational landscape consciousness.¹¹¹

Considering space, and exploring why landscape may offer a better approach, it is fundamentally down to relationship and the containment of the elements of a relationship in a singular entity. Landscape is more amenable to the idea of relationship than space or place. The problem with place is its particularity while the problem with space is its generality. Landscape or the development of the landscape approach in this thesis is based on relating ideas of particularity and generality, taking them to a stage where they find their expression or the voice of their interaction. Landscape is a potential medium for that voice. Of space Massey asks “If space is a product of practices, trajectories, interrelations, if we make space through interactions at all levels from the (so called) local to the (so called) global then those spatial identities such as places, regions, nations and the local and the global must be forged in this relational way too.”¹¹² Equipped with this understanding we can look at landscape as something that is in constant flux, impossible to bound and inevitably changeable. If however we understand something as constantly changing, then that understanding is based on a static realisation. That is, if something is constantly changing and we recognise change as immanent in it, then this immanence may be taken as absolute though ironically referring to change and difference. Using such written material as poetry for instance we can etch the consciousness of landscape in the development of language, thereby extending relationality to understand a static element in the constancy of flux. The character of relationality will thus be based on the idea of seeing movement as relative motion to a static entity.

In other words approaching landscape will be based on a reconciliation of sameness and difference. The gap created by tensions is filled by their relationality that is thus

¹¹¹ See Ballard, P.B. (1970) *Thought and Language*, New York, McGrath, pp.13-26 on the idea that one is dealing with more than words in language. There is also material and thought.

¹¹² Massey, D. (2004) ‘Geographies of Responsibility’, *Geografiska Annaler B*, 86, 5-18.

continually producing landscapes. Following Massey's implication that relations are creative *of* space rather than created *in* space¹¹³, we can progress this idea through developing an understanding that relations are creative of landscapes and thus through activities of dwelling and experience, creative of place. Again, these ideas of becoming are quite different to the prominent phenomenological ideas of being and dwelling.¹¹⁴ If we think about landscape as a concept as simply being, then it is merely a redundant object instead of which we would be the better for use of "place". However, if we understand it as exclusively becoming, then we have an even more elusive problem with intangibility. Moving the idea of relationality laterally to consider ideas of being and becoming is a worthwhile exploration in the development of landscape as a viable and arguably necessary concept. This is by virtue of its creation from inevitable tensions such as those of being and becoming, nature and culture, subject and object or individual and community.

Related to the concept of place is Pierre Bourdieu's idea of habitus.¹¹⁵ The habitus is an individually unique schematic that determines through unconsciously internalised dispositions, how we perceive and act in the world. A problematic concern with this idea is the role of individual human agency. Through the habitus, the individual and the behaviour of the individual is determined entirely by an external force meaning the individual is shaped by externality but does not shape it back through active agency. Thus, habitus is "a socially constituted system of cognitive and motivating structures...in which the agent's interests are defined."¹¹⁶ This is somewhat related to the Marxist idea of false consciousness.¹¹⁷ By such means, experience is based on and determined by social conditions and does not take into account the pre-existing character of the individual that is built up beyond the bubble of specific social and therefore perhaps regional, social conditions. Rather than being responsive, the individual is simply acted upon by external social forces and these determine the shape of the habitus as

¹¹³ Wylie (2007) op cit. p.200.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Wylie (2007) op cit. p.201. E.g. Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1988) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, London, Athlone Press.

¹¹⁵ Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.* p.76.

¹¹⁷ E.g. Wood, W. A. (2004) 'The Concept of Alienation' in Wood, W.A. *Karl Marx*, London, Routledge, pp.3-16. Cf. Bourdieu, P., Nice, R. (trans.) (1990) *The Logic of Practice*, Cambridge, Polity Press, p. 56.

habitation but do not communicate change back to the external social forces through practiced embodiment.¹¹⁸ Despite such concerns, Bourdieu's concept is extremely valuable for a couple of key reasons. Firstly, Bourdieu's concept reintroduced the individual, albeit into overly deterministic accounts of human practice, by introducing the idea of change in the habitus.¹¹⁹ Secondly, Bourdieu's concept worked to overcome a subject/object dualism that had been prominent in the conceptualisations of Simmel for instance.¹²⁰

Some commentators have argued however that Bourdieu's concept reverts back into objectivism because of its determinism, especially given that individual motive is considered an outcome of objective conditions.¹²¹ Thus there is something of a gap in the concept that does not account for a broader reflexivity beyond the individual engaged with the wider social externality. The individual is deduced from an overall social structure but this is not balanced as well as it might with an inductive human agency.

Yi-Fu Tuan has written about how filling a "curious gap" in the extensive and growing literature on place is the attempt to address directly the role of human speech in the creation of place."¹²² Though Tuan talks in terms of place, the principles of his argument apply equally to landscape since place is a particular kind of landscape. This gap is curious, Tuan believes, because "without speech-without the use and exchange of words and the ideas they convey-there cannot be, in the first instance, any human action or force directed toward preconceived goals".¹²³ The force directed toward preconceived goals is presumably considered by Tuan to mean the creation of place.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Bohman, J. (1999) 'Practical Reason and Cultural Constraint: Agency in Bourdieu's Theory of Practice' in Shusterman, R. (ed.) *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.129-152.

¹¹⁹ E.g. Griller, R. (1996) 'The Return of the Subject? The Methodology of Pierre Bourdieu', *Critical Sociology*, 22, 3-28.

¹²⁰ E.g. Simmel, G., Frisby, D. (ed.) (1980) *The Philosophy of Money*, London, Routledge. This was as Delanty (1996) notes, influenced by Weber's idea of rationalisation and Marx's idea of commodification. See Delanty, G. (1996) 'The Foundations of Social Theory: Origins and Trajectories' in Turner, B.S. (ed.) *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.21-47, (p.37).

¹²¹ E.g. King, A. (2000) 'Thinking with Bourdieu against Bourdieu: A 'Practical' Critique of the Habitus', *Sociological Theory*, vol. 18(3), 417-433.

¹²² Tuan, Y. F. (1991) 'Language and the Making of Place: A Narrative-Descriptive Approach' in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 81(4), 684-696, (p.684).

¹²³ *ibid.*

Understood in this thesis, the force finds its energy in tension between human and land and the ongoing performance of a relationship that may develop into a particular kind of landscape. The nature of that particular kind may be place. The preconceived goal is articulation, finding speech and finding words and ideas to convey a message, to communicate the particularities of a relationship. Through Tuan's deliberations we can see that language and communication between the elements of a relationship, like human and land for instance, are integral to expressing relationality and illustrating how tensions are drawn together.

So it is that the idea of landscape is preferred to place in this study because it includes an implied sense of ongoing human action in shaping land that goes beyond the scale of place in the form of its representation while place is more to do with the particular manner of the performative relationship. To illustrate this idea of scale further, we may know of such things as place and placelessness but there is, to draw a comparison, no such thing as landscape and 'landscapeless'. Place and placelessness are particular characteristics of a landscape relationship. The human is always engaged with land on some general level as a concept of landscape might imply but the human is not always engaged with a sense of place. Landscape allows scope for the manifest products of the act of shaping land in that they may or may not conform to a preconceived idea of place. Landscape and language allow a more integrated conceptualisation in which the essential activity of shaping is expressed through language shaping and shaped by land with the resultant articulation of landscape that may or may not be place. If place may be considered a container then it is a particular container for a particular action or mode of conscious behaviour.

Tuan goes on to explain that the reason for his idea of an emergent "curious gap" is borne out of a tendency for geographers and landscape historians as well as people in general to see place as an exclusive result of the material transformation of nature. This is an approach based on what is seen and the materiality beholden by the seeing eye. Importantly Tuan suggests that "what they do not see and hear are the discussions and commands crucial to the process of making anything that is not so routine as to be

almost instinctive.”¹²⁴ He uses the example of farmers consulting their helpers on the best way to clear a patch of forest and in the event that there is no one there, they will consult with themselves in internal dialogue¹²⁵, weighing up options and making articulated decisions based on observation and interpretation. This is an example of how one landscapes in the sense of verbal action. In the circumstances of landscaping, place can be created. So it is that language pervades the process of landscape. Language is the reason why we can talk of a process of landscape or a landscape consciousness or landscape renewal. In light of Tuan’s assertions on processes of discussion, let us consider the theoretical role of language in the making of landscape as a medium for form and manner.

1.8 Language and the co-ordinates of a Landscape Relationship

In understanding landscape as an essential geographical expression of synthesis, this research will draw on linguistic theory as a way of uncovering and articulating the ebb and flow of communication that unites human and land. This is developed through a poststructuralist belief that the way to gain an understanding of the factors that shape human lives is to deconstruct the multiple messages conveyed to us by the objects we encounter. Thus, the initial and primary mode of analysis is the deconstruction of language.¹²⁶ The application of language and linguistic theory is geographically useful as it facilitates synthesis through communication. By deconstruction of specific words like ‘Nature’, ‘Environment’ and ‘Landscape’ it enables a sense of conceptual meaning. Simplicity or even ambiguity opens up a general space in which a semblance of sameness or similarity may be identified behind different and particular places. This allows a practical rendering of sameness and difference by creating a stable understanding of what a word or concept like ‘Landscape’ means but also expressing how the concept embodied by something like place for instance, is open to difference. Language spoken and written is woven into the fabric of actions and the particularity of conscious behaviour in landscape.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

¹²⁶ Kitchin, R. & Tate, N. (2000) ‘Thinking about research’ in *Conducting Research in Human Geography: Theory, Methodology and Practice*, Essex, Pearson, pp. 1-27.

Wittgenstein's concept of the 'Language Game' was intended "to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or a form of life."¹²⁷ In the same way as language is a form of life so too is landscape, since it defines and illustrates life to such a degree that landscape is the essence of continuous living. Wittgenstein's language concepts enable us to account for and articulate the essence of this symbiosis of human and land by forging salient communicative links in such a way as to give a full sense of meaning to landscape by focusing on its essential embodiment of relationship and erosion of dichotomous boundaries.

In this manner, human and landscape meanings are not separated from each other by boundaries, but blend into one another through bridged linkages. The concept of a game is based on the idea that meaning something in language is analogous to making a move in a game. It serves as a stimulus to reaction through the move of interpretive statement. By virtue of the unique individual there is any number of available interpretive moves to be made. The analogy between a language and a game brings out the fact that only in the various and multiform activities of human life (a life constantly lived in environment) do words have meaning. In tying this into the hermeneutic process, the idea of interpretation is taken beyond reducing social reality to intelligibility to consider intelligibility itself. The purpose is not to look for meaning, but instead rather for use.¹²⁸ For example, the conceptual roots discussed here will not define meaning but will instead be of *use* in finding meaning in landscape consciousness as an active concept unifying human and land rather than an external, passive or objective entity.

As a foundation for an investigation into communicative processes, a demonstrative synthesis will be drawn to involve both subject and object as an inclusive unity rather than draw a Cartesian line between them. The freedom of movement generated by the lack of boundary in Wittgenstein's 'Language Game' aids this journey. As Wittgenstein says, "I wouldn't recognize the boundary you've drawn as the one I had in mind- for I wanted

¹²⁷ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (23).

¹²⁸ Joseph, J. (2002) *Hegemony: A Realist Analysis*, London, Routledge, p.152. See also Gibson, J. & Huemer, W. (2004) *The Literary Wittgenstein*, London, Routledge: "Wittgenstein's crucial move was to point out that understanding language requires us to focus on how it is used by members of the linguistic community."p.1.

to draw none at all.”¹²⁹ For this reason we shall not be afraid to take elements of those philosophical concepts that provide us with the support to explore a conceptual outline of landscape consciousness.

This approach is related to Longhurst’s very useful understanding of the place of subjectivity considering that the extension of the idea of the subject and subjectivity illustrates a recognition of their importance at the heart of cultural geography.¹³⁰ A point of access to this concept of the subject as being interconnected and thereby subsumed into a larger consciousness through relational activity is through actor network theory and the aspect of it that makes the boundaries which commonly inform knowledge porous. The most important aspect in this regard is the idea of a “material-semiotic” relationship as developed by Latour in particular¹³¹, in that as a theoretical framework it can trace or describe relations between things and concepts. Its translation into this thesis is in establishing and enabling an ability to render and describe a relationship between manner and form, manner being visible action or thing, and form being theoretical concept. The theory, if it may be so called¹³², is useful in exploring the general and particular types of conversation that happen between thing and concept but also between things themselves, specifically between human and land and their equality in the processual creation of a particular kind of landscape product. Where ANT assumes an epistemological conformity between thing and concept, the distinction in this thesis is that there is an epistemological distinction to be made since the concept or the theory is fixed and the manner or the action is fluid. Thus, there are different ways of knowing landscape. It may be helpful to think of a metaphysics of landscape in this

¹²⁹ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell (76); see Staten, H. (1988) ‘Wittgenstein’s Boundaries’, *New Literary History*, 19(2), 309-318. Cf. Jones, R. (2009) ‘Categories, Borders and Boundaries’, *Progress in Human Geography*, 33(2), 174-189 (p.176).

¹³⁰ Longhurst, R. (2003) ‘Introduction: Subjectivities, Spaces and Places’ in Anderson, K. et al. *The Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, SAGE Publications, pp.283-290.

¹³¹ Latour, B. (1987) *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press. Cf. Akrich, M. and B. Latour (1992) ‘A Summary of a Convenient Vocabulary for the Semiotics of Human and Nonhuman Assemblies’ in Bijker, W. and Law, J. (eds.) *Shaping Technology, Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*. Cambridge, Mass, MIT Press, pp. 259-264.

¹³² Law, J. (1999) ‘After ANT: Topology, Naming and Complexity’ in Law, J. & Hassard, J. (eds.) *Actor Network Theory and After*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp. 1-15; Law, J. (2007) ‘Actor Network Theory and Material Semiotics’, version of 25th April 2007, available at <http://www.heterogeneities.net/publications/Law2007ANTandMaterialSemiotics.pdf>, (downloaded on 18th May, 2010), p.2.

regard, in that the thing or the manner exists on one level and the concept or form exists on another. The challenge for this thesis is finding a way to render this interactive relationship between form and manner.

As an example of the usefulness of ANT in directing an approach to this challenge, Longhurst discusses the traditional boundaries between nature and culture. In short, such an approach tackles pre-existing boundaries so that the field of subjectivity can be seen to encompass the objective world.¹³³ Such an application of actor network theory in material semiotics is useful in asking questions of the binary structures that commonly inform western knowledge. Nevertheless, it fails to find proper expression for the product of such deconstruction. Talking of ways in which the subjective can encompass the objective or even vice-versa, implies a sense of dominance of one over the other. This is a similar problem argued by Hetherington and Lee where they claim that relational theory such as that facilitated by ANT, counters an ontology of division but does so in such a way as to construct another constraining ontology.¹³⁴ A possible way of avoiding this through ANT is by way of promoting continuance rather than dualism and talking of social structures in terms of a verb rather than a noun.¹³⁵ Relying excessively on process and change however, brings with it the problem of intangibility and collective evaporation. There is a need for a kernel of definition to maintain denotative strength and conceptual significance.

The challenge is relating these and Actor-Network-Theory's proposition of a relational ontology provides some direction in this regard. Useful as well is the recursive idea that relationships are formed in ready-made spaces but also that they are creative of those spaces.¹³⁶ The result of a processual landscape relationship is a created space that may in its particularity be deemed place. However it may also be asked where the process in the making of the product is performed. It may be the case that there is a

¹³³ *ibid*, p.287.

¹³⁴ Hetherington, K. and Lee, N. (2000) 'Social order and the blank figure', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18, 169-184.

¹³⁵ In sociological terms, see Law, J. (1992) 'Notes on the Theory of the Actor Network: Ordering, Strategy and Heterogeneity', *Systems Practice and Action Research*, 5 (4), 379-393. Cf. Mitchell, W.J.T. (1994) 'Introduction' in Mitchell, W.J.T. *Landscape and Power*, London, Routledge, p.1ff.

¹³⁶ Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, p.201

space in which the relationship develops. The development of that relationship to the point where it creates a product is a renewal of that space. In other words the flow of knowledge doesn't so much see new spaces created as it sees old spaces *re*-created and transformed. The universal idea of space is tailored to the particular circumstances of any given relationship. The form takes on different appearances. So, there is a landscape and there is the process of its creation and re-creation. The creative force is formed by the friction or tension in the space between human and land. The creation at the end of that process fills that gap or spatialised distance.

With such an emphasis on flows there is no useful product in intangibility. There is need to achieve a sense of balance, for something that is tangible but not constraining. Useful in this regard, ANT argues against preconceived divisions of human and non-human or nature and culture. Thus, non-human entities, among which we might include land, have equal status to humans in their influence, performance and activity. This argument is core to the study in the sense that human and land are viewed as equals meaning neither human nor land has primacy over the other with the result that neither are discrete or clearly displaying will, performance or creativity over the other. In this sense, we understand landscape as a symbiosis of human and land. After Foucault, power then comes from everywhere and everyone to produce landscapes.¹³⁷ In this respect, in terms of the articulated landscape product, it is entirely justifiable that there should be an equality between human and object since power comes from all elements in the relationship.

Considering such a problem, this work offers a solution in dealing with landscape as a repository for thought, language and material on equal bases, finding a discernable sense of being in the concept but on the other hand allowing a flow of change. Developing an ontology that enables such a mechanism to reconcile stability and instability without imposing a similarly constraining ontology is a problem the concept of a landscape consciousness comes to terms with. In its elusive character landscape ironically has the ability to offer a tangible expression for the tensions that are produced in the unity of such traditional dualisms as subject and object or nature and culture.

¹³⁷ Foucault, M. (1977) *The Order of Things*, London, Routledge, p.155.

Subsuming the idea of subject-object into a singular landscape concept helps to relieve the hangover that a dichotomised tradition can impose on knowledge and its progression. The concept developed through this work needs to function in such a way that it is present but yet not present to allow both fixity and fluidity.

Taking such elements the thesis will develop a working methodological framework to undertake a study of landscape consciousness by developing a theory that evolves on the basis of a correlation of sameness and difference. Theories which have moved within such circles of diversity, if not necessarily stability and instability, include Appleton's 'Habitat theory'. This theory postulates that the relation between the human observer and the perceived environment is basically the same as the relation of a creature to its habitat.¹³⁸ So it is that a beautiful landscape is that which means survival. A balanced landscape enables detection for the capture of prey but on the other hand enables refuge as prey. Accordingly, landscape values are not based on occupational or ideological terms but rather a simple atavistic instinct for survival and predation. In a way, such an approach has echoes of Marxist economic determinism. Where habitat theory is based on survival in the primitive sense, Marxism is supported by the capitalist 'mode of production' that people employ for survival.¹³⁹

Criticism of such a theory may be that it understates the nature of human cultural development and the idea of primitive and atavistic mechanisms in the nature of habit and custom in human life over time and experience. Despite this, such a reading is useful since it promotes consciously or not, simplicity and a way of looking at landscape that goes behind the institutionalised term itself. The way it understates the dialectical interplay of the material and human however, cannot be overlooked. Human landscape ideas are not conclusively primal and predative but are also based on human need for recognition, validation and understanding among other personal, occupational, emotional and ideological causes. There is a simplicity in the sense of the primal and a complexity in the sense of manifest human need. The idea of a broader context, one

¹³⁸ Appleton, J. (1975) *The Experience of Landscape*, London, John Wiley and Sons, p.69ff.

¹³⁹ Kitchin, R. & Tate, N. (2000) 'Thinking about research' in *Conducting Research in Human Geography: Theory, Methodology and Practice*, Essex, Pearson, pp. 14-15.

that goes beyond the human, may be a way of coming to terms with an interaction between simplicity and complexity. Perhaps these complexities or differences have some semblance of commonality.

In recent work, Lorimer has shown that ideas such as those relating humans and animals have important lessons for understanding how humans live relative to other species through likenesses and distinctions.¹⁴⁰ This is a valuable approach to understanding the idea of a more-than-human life, a life in which the human is not isolated or confined but part of a life lived in broader context of other lives and species. The human is environed or in a symbiotic relationship with a broader context of flora and fauna through interactions that bring one outside oneself through the expression of something beyond oneself. Differences fit into or flow through this relationship that is enacted between the human and the wider context of land or the experiences of nature and environment. To employ Appleton's terminology, there is the habitat and the experience of the habitat.

In terms of crafting a theory of landscape there is need to express the idea as a relationship, an acknowledgement of both as constituent parts in a higher conceptual structure. The theoretical conceptualisation of this work will be based on a dynamic of landscape consciousness that correlates sameness and difference. This is illustrated in the sense that landscape may be recognised as a stable concept in form, but also that it may look different in the manner of its realisation. Taking a revisionist approach to the vocabulary of 'nature', 'environment' and 'landscape' a stable and logical concept will be constructed to allow the continual flow of landscape becoming. A hint that such tension is implicit in landscape is alluded to, not necessarily with intent, by Appleton through the idea of correlated states of exposure and concealment in the balanced landscape.¹⁴¹ Bringing this idea to a higher conceptual plateau, there is the exposed manner and the concealed form of a landscape concept. Exploring how the particular

¹⁴⁰ Lorimer, H. (2010) 'Forces of nature, Forms of life: Calibrating Ethology and Phenomenology', in Anderson, B. and Harrison, P. (eds.) *Taking Place: Non-Representational Geographies*, London, Ashgate, pp.55-79, (p.56).

¹⁴¹ Appleton, J. (1978) *The Poetry of Habitat*, Hull, Landscape Research Group, Department of Geography, University of Hull, p. 7.

manner and the universal interact, how they achieve a sense of balance in a relationship is integral to this thesis. Finding a way of expressing and dealing with the innate tensions in landscape, tensions such as sameness and difference and balancing them with practical expression is a developing process in the work.

1.9 Conclusion

This research in itself develops, as any research must, on the heritage that has preceded it. The central problem to emerge in this brief survey is imbalance. Either landscape is an objective representative term or it is a performative term. Rather than balancing ideas of representation and performance in a concept of landscape, there has been a shift from one to another.¹⁴² Either way, landscape is rendered a term elusive and frustrating to work with by this imbalance. This work will draw on strands of thought from the conceptual foci of this introduction to distil a landscape concept that is developed around the idea of a relationship. Constituent in that relationship are representation and performance or form and manner, rather than one or another. There is a fundamental sense of commonality to any landscape practice but the way in which that practice is carried out may manifest itself in innumerable ways. There is no right or wrong way of 'doing' landscape. If it has any laws, then they are fluid and malleable. Perhaps the form is the rule and the difference in manner is illuminated by the form, an illumination achieved by means of relative motion. If there is a law of landscape then it is given a degree of flexibility through the manner of its realisation.

As a precedent for the paradoxical idea of a flexible fixity, we might consider the example of the geographical lifeworld concept which drew on phenomenological bases but did not restrict itself from moving beyond phenomenological law. Phenomenology tries to meet the things of the world as those things are in themselves and so describe them. One must distance oneself from one's surroundings and try to look at things in a new way. Geography studies the earth as the dwelling place of humans, space and place. When one takes both methods, a phenomenological geography is born. It borrows knowledge of both fields and so directs its attention to "the essential nature of man's

¹⁴² Wylie, J. (2007) op. cit. p. 163.

[sic] dwelling on earth.”¹⁴³ In order to make a significant contribution to geographical knowledge this research must preserve a sense of openness and a willingness to move beyond pre-existing structures, structures that deal with landscape as either representation or performance for example. The challenge for this study then, is to identify ways of coping with the imposition of structure but also allowing the freedom to express difference. It is not the intention of this study to provide solutions to a linear problem, rather to provide hints to understanding rhythm, in terms of temporal and experiential momentum, and the dynamism of a landscape relationship expressed and articulated through the structural idea of a consciousness of landscape.¹⁴⁴

As for the epistemological problems of landscape, in the sense of trying to reconcile two different ways of knowing landscape in abstract and performance, the co-ordinates of their reconciliation are hinted at through Said’s work on *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*. In the foreword to the same work, Rubin writes that “Said’s emphasis on this phenomenological preoccupation (being condemned to meaning) and the existential predicament (being condemned to living) provides the coordinates of an antimony (an opposition between an embattled subject and a dynamic object) that gets transposed onto the works themselves.”¹⁴⁵ The conceptual root of these co-ordinates will feed into a concept of landscape that is based on a similar idea of inherent antimony based on the idea of landscape espousing characteristics of “Being” as absolute and “Becoming” as apparent. Much of this is exploring how ideas of momentum and non-momentum in truths can co-exist in a positive singular concept. This is related to Foucault’s idea of power, considering it something productive of reality rather than negative, constraining and limiting.¹⁴⁶ In order to see this in practicality, the concept will be transposed through language onto literary and poetic

¹⁴³ Seamon, D. ‘Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place Ballets’ in Buttimer, A., and Seamon, D. (eds.) *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, London, Croom Helm, p.148. Similarly Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977) both use the concept of multiple worlds, although it was never Husserl’s intention ‘to license a multiplicity of different frames of reference’ See Johnston, R.J. et al. (2000) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford: Blackwell, p.581.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Buttimer, A. (1996) ‘Geography and Humanism in the late twentieth century’ in Douglas, I., Huggett, R. & Robinson, M., *Companion Encyclopaedia of Geography*, London, Routledge, pp. 837-860.

¹⁴⁵ Rubin, A. (2008) ‘Foreword’ in Said, E. (1966) *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, New York, Columbia University Press, pp. ix-xix, p. xii.

¹⁴⁶ Foucault, M. (1977) *The Order of Things*, London, Routledge, p.155. See also, Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, p.111ff.

examples. Said's influence thus is more implicit in the development of its conceptual influence than materially explicit in analysing the Conradian fiction of autobiography.

Highlighting the geographical heritage behind this project and situating the work in the broader cultural geography context, we can consider many of the questions raised by this knowledge and the problems they present by developing a workable theoretical concept for empirical application. Approaching this task through the medium of the written text sees development of an interpretive understanding in how human and land relate through an articulated landscape expression. Raymond Williams has written of dealing with the confluences, separations, entanglements and consequences of writing in society.¹⁴⁷ It is important to remember that none of these diminish the power of writing itself as an expression of landscape and a geography where words are placed and places are worded through the action and actuality of landscaping.¹⁴⁸

In terms of how the thesis will unfold following this introductory chapter, it will be divided into three parts. These parts are entitled "Observation", "Interpretation" and "Articulation". They are so called in order to realise the idea that landscape is text in the sense that we have initial observations that grow into interpretations that then grow into articulations. The thesis is approached as a developing process between human and land, in this particular instance, the writer or perhaps more accurately, the voice of this thesis, and land. Thus the narrative is employed as a means of illustrating a progressive closeness, ranging as it does from an initial third-person mode of expression seeking a way into the relationship between human and land, to an eventual first-person articulation of the product of that relationship. From this introduction it has been gleaned that there is a duality to landscape in its performance and its representation. Drawing these distinctions together, it may be proposed that performance is creative of representation and the representation informs subsequent performance. Since there is an idea of landscape performance and landscape representation, there is a recursive mechanism in that landscape as a concept is creative of itself.

¹⁴⁷ Williams, R. (1983) *Writing in Society*, London, Verso.

¹⁴⁸ On actuality, e.g. Woodruff-Smith, D. (2004) 'Consciousness and Actuality' in *Mind World: Essays in Phenomenology and Ontology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp.211-242.

Part I 'Observations' initialises the idea of communication and the idea of language in the making of landscape as a relationship. Communication, and language as the trace of that communication, draws human and land together. The particular expression of a particular relationship is drawn in turn into a plural, wider community. Exploring these ideas of language and community sees a move into ideas of reality and truth, from the perspective of language and the way in which it is wielded in the experience of the world. Certainty in reality and truth is shown to be elusive as there is the continuing potential of revelation. Chapters two and three are about seeking and developing these criteria for a landscape concept built around language. By chapter four a concept of landscape is reasoned, in light of language and its use in the making of landscape, the nature of how human and land might interact, the uncertainty of that interaction and how that uncertainty might relate to an idea of certainty. In other words, how manner might relate to form.

Having established this concept, the nascent observations that outline the co-ordinates of a landscape relationship are fleshed in the context of an interpretive framework. The concept distilled from observation forms the base for an interpretive framework. Part II 'Interpretations' is about environing this concept in a case study. This is in order to test its robustness. Given that landscape is text and that the idea of landscape is cultivated on language, then a written text is a suitable case study. This written text or texts, given that we will have observed community and sociability as integral to the making of landscape, must be available to interpret on the basis that it uses language to express an idea of landscape. As an interpretive or didactic example, interpretations inform a particular self-expression, an articulation that takes ownership of the lessons interpreted.

The idea of landscape must be made plain and so it is important that the fabric of this interpretive case study be a medium that makes the idea apparent in a way that uses language in an ostensible way. By this it is meant that this medium must push words beyond the limits of what they do in normal communication. This is meant in the sense that words are used in such a way as one might not ordinarily think of, yet at the same time a deceptive simplicity leads to asking why one hadn't thought of it oneself. This

capability of the poetic serves as a ready example or as a bridge between the theoretically dominant material of “Observations” and the empirically dominant material of Part III - “Articulations”. Poetry and the ability of such a medium to meet these criteria provides a fruitful interpretive case study in the sense that words are the means by which something new and individual is created. Words are taken, words that have been used before, and are wielded in such a way as to communicate something particular and original while at the same time adhering to a tradition of what it means to be poetic. In this way the potential of words to say something new is consistently tested in a very apparent way. As the writer of this thesis and therefore the interpreter of how these words are wielded in the making of landscape, these interpretations found will themselves be translated into something new by means of personal reflection.

The lessons learnt in the interpretive environment of the second part “Interpretations”, will form the basis of Part III - “Articulations”. This concluding section is delivered in the form of a first person narrative documenting everyday living experience in a voice distilled from observation and interpretation. This final part is designed to illustrate and articulate as it were, the relationship between the form of landscape, and the manner of its rendering. It will be possible to observe a sameness or a commonality in the way these vignettes unfold. Though their performance is different in each case, there is a universality of form at which each of these different articulated renderings attempts. This will establish first-hand the basis of the relationship between form and manner. The manner of landscape performance is an attempt at an elusive form, an absolute certainty that can never be realised through lived experience since there is no right or wrong way of doing landscape. The performance of landscape will be shown to be an opinion in relation to the fact of the representation. This introduction has served its purpose as a review and a way of situating an approach before tackling a discernible landscape approach that is defined by ideas of relationship and balance of such things as representation and performance.

The most dominant motif in this thesis is the idea of particularity and generality. The thesis structure mirrors this idea. Each particular chapter contains its own observations, interpretations and articulations. Beyond the chapter, each part contains its own

observations, interpretations and articulations and beyond the part, the thesis in its entirety contains observations, interpretations and articulations. This is to do with the vagueness and ambiguity of words based on scale. There is observation in the general sense and there is observation in the particular sense. At each stage, the general, universal idea of a relationship that develops through stages of observation, interpretation and articulation belies the particularity of chapter and part. This ongoing dialogue is designed to illustrate how landscapes come from somewhere and go somewhere. For example observations are made on the articulations of another, the articulation, the landscape as tangible product is the manifestation and the point of access for an initial observation. Those observations are fleshed by interpretation and the interpretation is made particular through a specific kind of articulation. Particularities are connected by a general idea. This is really about an inward movement where the sum of the particularities makes a universality knowable. As with the layered landscape and its continuing potential to reveal, the text too has this continual potential to reveal. The elements of a relationship communicate in a lateral sense across spatial distance and a progressive sense over temporal distance.

Temporally, past experiences influence present ones as present ones will influence future ones. It is through spatiality then, that the details of that influence are made apparent in a particular way, the manner illustrated by the appearance of a landscape. Putting it such a way underlines how we can talk in general terms about a particular manifestation of landscape. The theory or the clinical form may be made knowable by the particular manner of its realisation. There is the form and the experience of that form. As Rose notes, “while landscape is described in terms of struggle, it is defined in terms of structure.”¹⁴⁹ This thesis in itself mirrors the general structure of that struggle and the particular terms of its realisation through an ontology of landscape as relationship and medium. The chronology of the thesis is based on the processual development of this relationship and the culmination of this process in the appearance of a product. The apparent product is an imperfect version of an unattainable, perfect abstract. Thus the end comes around again to a new beginning and another attempt.

¹⁴⁹ Rose, M. (2002) ‘Landscape and Labyrinths’, *Geoforum*, 33, 455-467, (p.459)

Part One: Observations

“Logic takes care of itself; all we have to do is to look and see how it does it.”
- Ludwig Wittgenstein - *Notebooks*,¹⁵⁰

Introduction

This first part seeks to develop landscape as a progressive and productive focus through the context of relationship. The reality of that relationship is based on a phenomenological understanding in that the reality of the world is that which is apparent to the individual. Behind the appearance is the essential form of reality, a general idea that links different and particular appearances together. A general idea allows us to call two distinct and different entities by the same name. The theoretical idea of reality or the representative template is not readily apparent since it does not emerge directly in the performance or practice of living experience. The reality of landscape in this thesis is cultivated from a phenomenological reality but there is a general idea of landscape behind the directly visible appearance. The language of apparent realities communicates a general idea or a general idea may be distilled from apparent realities. Seeking a concept of landscape through the role of linguistic expression involves engagement with articulated landscapes so that we might be able to distil an abstract form, an idea of perfection that no particular expression itself can embody in its entirety. This mirrors the development of the thesis in many ways since the particularity of this experience in seeking and finding an idea of landscape will lead to another articulation.

The new beginning leads to a new end. Communication, making new articulations from old ones develops a relationship between human and land not only as a singular individual collective, but also extending beyond this to a plurality of humans and lands through which new landscapes are produced. Developing an understanding of how words are created, shared and employed to render and express a landscape relationship is essential to seeking out a conceptual rendering of landscape. Through the course of Part I – ‘Observations’ then, the concern will be with observing how communication

¹⁵⁰ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1961) *Notebooks: 1914-1916*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.11.

works and how this can relate to an idea of landscape that is relationship, the process and product of communicating elements.

Through consideration of landscape as expressed and articulated in a written or literary context, for instance, the essential fragments are the letters, words and sentences which communicate a language and a way of landscaping. Through communication and sharing in the landscapes of others, our own landscapes evolve in their expression. Language is integral to an ongoing landscape expression. When we arrive in a new place we observe it and communicate our thoughts and feelings on it, just as when we walk around places that are as familiar to us as an old pair of shoes, we describe, assimilate, communicate and are conscious of our surroundings. Thought and language connect us to our surroundings in the way we act and respond. The gap between human and land is filled with thought and language, it is the space in which landscape finds its denotative expression.

Non-representational theory is useful in this regard where the representation or the form, finds its apparent expression through performance and embodied practice.¹⁵¹ It is not so much that there is not a representation, but that the fixed representation may be taken outside itself by performance and the ongoing fluidity of doing. Lorimer's idea of 'more-than-representational' is one way of coming to terms with this shortcoming of the terminology.¹⁵² The structure afforded by a theoretical, representational understanding can act as a conduit for the performance of landscape, making it apparent through the context of a universality. If landscape in representational terms is as text then imbuing representation with a performative element opens landscape to action that is text, performativity conveyed through use of the verb. The representation is performed in a space opened by the potential ways a textual reality can make itself

¹⁵¹ E.g. Thrift, N. (1996) *Spatial Formations*, London, Sage; Thrift, N. (1997) 'The Still Point: Resistance, Expressiveness, Embodiment and Dance', in Pile, S. & Keith, M. (eds.) *Geographies of Resistance*, London, Routledge, pp.124-152. Thrift, N. & Dewsbury, J.D. (2000) 'Dead Geographies – and How To Make Them Live', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18, 411-432. See also McCormack, D. (2003) 'An Event of Geographical Ethics in Spaces of Affect', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 28, 458-508.

¹⁵² Lorimer, H. (2005) 'Cultural Geography, The busyness of being "more-than-representational"', *Progress in Human Geography*, 29(1) 83-94.

apparent through lived experience. The structure of the text may be performed in different ways. As a text, this thesis is performed in a particular way. It performs the general structure of a landscape universality in a particular way.

When we read landscape renditions through the medium of the text, we find writers help us to think about and communicate our experiences of landscape. Again, it is about this idea of community, finding a new end from the seed of an old one. The first chapter in this part, 'Performing Landscape in Language' thus will endeavour to explore the associations between word and object; or perhaps the associative words connecting subject and object, moving towards an idea of landscape as relationship and the scales of that relationship on an individual level and on a communal level. Language configures the elements of a landscape in our minds drawing these elements into a knowable or identifiable landscape, in turn creating new forms for shaping land and human in the experience of a living relationship.¹⁵³ Language thus is a fundamental element in the process, production and indeed reproduction of landscapes. This chapter begins a process that moves from observation of the word, to observing what the word can produce and finally to observing a reconciliation of process and product in a theoretical structure. This first part is about moving through appearances to the revelation of a universality

The chapter 'The Appearance of a Landscape Product' expands on the idea of production and reproduction, developing an idea of landscape that is based on two distinct but interrelated features of process and product. This is derived from an idea of landscape as something that is both being in an abstract sense and becoming in the sense of an ongoing action. Exploring ideas of truth then, truth may be seen not as something finite and ultimately defined, but something that is open to change subject to the revelation of new knowledge. Similarly the product of landscape is not something ultimately defined but rather something subject to the discovery of new knowledge. The

¹⁵³ See the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty who aptly explains the connectivity of language thus: "Language surrounds each speaking subject, like an instrument with its own inertia, its own demands, constraints, and internal logic, and nevertheless remains open to the initiative of the subject.", from Sallis, J. (2003) *Phenomenology and the Return to Beginnings*, Pittsburgh, Duquesne University Press, p.62.

product is related to the process through the potential for further revelation. Developing this idea of revelation, the idea of vagueness and ambiguity in language is explored. A word may be valued, understood and wielded in different ways. The word stands as a space open to a flow of many different meanings and readings.

Chapters two and three are about seeking and establishing use in landscape and chapter four distils these ideas of use into coherent functionality. The chapter 'Reconciling Performance and Product in a General Representative Structure' draws together the elements of the previous chapters to observe a concept of landscape, considering the ways in which process and product interact on an abstract level. The concept of landscape stands as an absolute abstract. Through this ultimately invisible abstract form flows the manner of visible action, attempting at the unattainable perfection in myriad ways. The apparent reality is imperfect given the continual potential for change. Particular performances flesh a general representative structure with appearance. The flow is never-ending since absolute perfection is unattainable. The transition from this Part I - 'Observations' to Parts II - 'Interpretations' and III - 'Articulations', begins a transition from seeking general use to finding and living particular meaning.

Chapter Two: Performing Landscape through Language

“How different are the words ‘home’, ‘Christ’, ‘ale’, ‘master’, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit.”

-James Joyce - *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*¹⁵⁴

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is designed to explore in a general sense how a landscape can appear through the use of language. In the plurality of communicated words, expressions and actions, language makes landscape a social art. This will become more readily apparent in Part II-‘Interpretations’ where there is engagement with a wider textual community. Linguistic interactions serve as a creative force and develop landscape into something in constant flux. Language and its use ensure that landscapes respond to a sense of constant change. Consistency or sameness and the differences in circumstantial instance promote renewal and transformation through their very paradox and tension. In terms of the idea of nature, this is illustrated by such examples as the contrasting ideals of the Enlightenment and Romanticism that broadly debate whether nature untouched by humans was a source of original sin or of original innocence.¹⁵⁵ Such contrasts illustrate the scope of human and land in terms of how they relate to each other in different ways though the word is the same. In the potentiality of such extremes through a singular concept there is infinite creative possibility for its understanding and interpretation and thus its expression.

Let us consider this relationship and how land features manifest themselves through language. Linguistically, and hence conceptually, the things in the sharpest focus of our “mind’s eye” are the things that are public enough to be talked of openly, common and conspicuous enough to be talked of often and near enough to sense to be quickly

¹⁵⁴ Joyce, J. (1996) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, London, Penguin Classics, p.189.

¹⁵⁵ See Macnaughten, P., & Urry, J. (1998) *Contested Natures*, London, Sage Publications, p. 11ff. for an articulation of this dispute between Thomas Hobbes and John Locke: on the one hand, Hobbes believing primeval nature to be crude, brutish and poor, while on the other Locke believing it to be peaceful, convivial and pure. The roots of this argument extend back as far as classical times with equally contrasting views on primeval nature. For a detailed survey see Lovejoy, A.O., and Boas, G. (1935) *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, Baltimore, John Hopkins Press. See also Glacken, C.J. (1967) *Traces on the Rhodian Shore*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

identified and learned by name. It is these material things themselves, rocks, trees, rivers, mountains, hills, that define their expression in words. Each individual learns their language and the actual qualifying words and sentences that create landscape from other people. Such language and ways of landscape are learned, be it from family, neighbours, friends, teachers or writers. Landscape formation for the individual is thus formed under conspicuously inter-subjective circumstances in space. As an extension of this we might talk of the experiences of the individual developing accretions of meaning which derive circumstantially, *intra*-subjectively over time. That is to say that landscapes experienced or perceived on a subjective level by the individual in a past context serve to influence the present and future perception of the same individual through communication between memories and experiences within the individual self. Forests, rocks and stones, rivers and lakes serve to illustrate the rich and varied potential of both land and human creating landscape out of the tensions in their relationship.

When reading landscape renditions we absorb the words presented to us and form them into images of our own unique making. In many ways, words written serve as sunlight, illuminating hitherto darkened regions through apparent difference. The words work as stimuli to interact with our senses in order to create images. The importance of choice, choice of word, of sentence structure, of grammar and syntax in landscape writing means that the light brought forth by words can illuminate spaces in very different ways. The way in which we observe as readers and the way in which we are observed by writers, ensures a complex inter-relationship of observationality, making landscape a social art grown and nurtured in the mind. To draw on Dr. Johnson kicking the stone to demonstrate its reality and the existence of matter to refute Bishop Berkeley's posit for the non-existence of matter¹⁵⁶, we might call the observable "worlds" of the page the existence of non-matter, or perhaps more accurately, we can posit a middle ground where the word is materially constituent in "rock". Without the word, rock is non-existent and conversely without some physical entity we can call rock, the word is non-existent. This inter-related dynamic is implicit in the larger dynamic of

¹⁵⁶Hill, G.B. (ed.) (1935) *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, Oxford, Oxford University Press. I. 471. Cf. Patey, D.F. (1986) 'Johnson's refutation of Berkeley: Kicking the Stone Again', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 47(1) 139-145.

landscape more generally. Without the contextualising influence of human land is non-existent and vice-versa, without land human is non-existent. Together then in the matter of this collective, landscape is created. It is something known or realised as a mind-related entity in the way it appears, the concomitant abstraction of which is apparently unknown to the human in everyday life thereby rendering perfection eternally elusive. As a result, landscape is rendered as a concept in perpetual motion through continual attempts at absolute perfection by the continuously imperfect lived life.

Language refers to the breath, the sound, and the other physical features of human speech and writing that refract, reverberate and echo through land as they do so through human. The full range of contexts in which language appears is material in that speakers are alive, functioning, changing, moving and interacting as part of something that exhibits these characteristics and thus occupy a shared embodiment.¹⁵⁷ Since, as Sheeran states, “land and place are made up of language as much as, if not more than, they are made of earth and buildings”¹⁵⁸, perhaps we might then say that the definition of landscape is not only in the representative substance of land and human but also in the performative, substantive movement of the relationship. Landscape is something that is consistently changing, reshaped and renovated. As humans constituent in landscape we develop a perceivable level of reality to facilitate our engagement. This reality is quantified through pre-existing discursive networks that illustrate the flowing connectivity of language. The idea of separate human and land is elided through linguistic links.

2.2 Discourse and the Language Game

A concept or idea of landscape as assimilation or relationship can be extrapolated through a discursive mechanism relating to language since it is communication that generates the performance of assimilation in a landscape relationship. Wittgenstein

¹⁵⁷Kristeva, J. Menke, A.M. (trans.) (1981) *Language, the Unknown: An Initiation into Linguistics*, New York, Columbia University Press, pp.18-42.

¹⁵⁸ Sheeran, P. (1994) ‘The Narrative Creation of Place: The Example of Yeats’ in Collins, T. (ed.) *Decoding the Landscape*, Galway, The Centre for Landscape Studies, p.150.

renders this sense of language connecting people to their worlds through the following aphorism: “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.”¹⁵⁹ Wittgenstein’s concept of the language game helps explore the nature of language and its role in elaborating landscape meanings on the inter-subjective level. He first introduces us to this idea in the second passage of his *Philosophical Investigations*.

2....Let us imagine a language ...The language is meant to serve for communication between a builder A and an assistant B. A is building with building-stones; there are blocks, pillars, slabs and beams. B has to pass the stones, and in the order in which A needs them. For this purpose they use a language consisting of the words “block”, “pillar”, “slab”, “beam”. A calls them out; --B brings the stone which he has learnt to bring at such-and-such a call. --Conceive of this as a complete primitive language.¹⁶⁰

At first, Wittgenstein asks us to imagine *a* language. In this passage he uses the language of communication between builders. This concept is applicable to different languages or any particular language. Thus, we can develop the idea through a communicative process of landscape. For example, if we consider “A”, rather than being a builder, but instead simply a speaker relating an experience of landscape we can conceive of “A” articulating a landscape through words. Now, if “A” talks about a clump of trees, “A” has potentially numerous ways of rendering the clump in conversation. “A” thinks about communicating the clump of trees to “B”. “B” conceives of the image “A” is presenting in order for the experience to engage them both communicatively. For this purpose they use a word-set which might for instance be detailed through the following words, “forest”, “wood”, “copse”, “timberland”, “timber”, “grove”. “A” chooses a word and uses it. “B” observes the word and by the visual or apparent stimulus it prompts, conceives of a particular image that can, but not necessarily must, correlate with the initial concept intended by “A”.

Thus in communicative exchange not only is “A” relating the singular human-land relationship of which “A” is a part, but beyond that, “A” is communicating in a particular language to “B”, developing a particular linguistic sense of an apparent reality in landscape. This may be read in the great nineteenth century zeal for the

¹⁵⁹ Wittgenstein, L., Russell, B. (intro.) (1949) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul. 5.6ff; Cf. also Castree, N. (2005) *Nature*, London, Routledge p. xviii ff.

¹⁶⁰ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (2).

“picturesque” in which ‘natural’ views or scenes were considered to be Claudian rather than the other way around: Nature itself was Claudian. The language used to describe or render the visual was borne out of this fashionable artistic sensibility. Duffy notes how

“Lady Chatterton in 1839 articulated the view of many of the new tourist elite in being ‘particularly struck with the rich and vivid colouring of the scenery in Ireland. When the sun shines after one of the frequent showers, the whole landscape resembles a highly finished and freshly varnished picture, not by any well known master, for the composition, to speak technically is totally different, though I think quite as fine as any ideal imagery of Claude, Hobbins [Hobbema] or Poussin”¹⁶¹

The creation of this landscape is based on choice of words and the formation of these words into sentences as a result of an engagement with a particular sensibility. But what is more important is that the language operates in a set discourse. If for example “A” chooses to say “timber” rather than “wood” then “A” is assuming a certain generality of understanding to the concept of “timber”.¹⁶² In essence there is a word and a general outline of it as an abstract through which a response might be formulated. Let us consider how these responses might be formed through learning. Wittgenstein details this in the following passage:

7. In the practice of the use of language (2) one party calls out the words, the other acts on them. In instruction in the language the following process will occur: the learner names the objects; that is, he utters the word when the teacher points to the stone.--And there will be this still simpler exercise: the pupil repeats the words after the teacher--both of these being processes resembling language.¹⁶³

So it is that human and object is associated by word. Given these tools to communicate observation, the pupil goes away and observes land for instance. When presented with something approximating an image through which a word “stone” was learnt, the material stimulus prompts the word. This illustrates for us the basic principles of language association and observationality. We then possess a knowing of

¹⁶¹ Duffy, P. J. (1994) ‘The Changing Rural Landscape 1750-1850: Pictorial Evidence’ in Kennedy, B.P. & Gillespie, R. (eds.) *Ireland: Art into History*, Dublin, Town House, pp. 26-43, (p.32).

¹⁶² E.g. Hills, T.T., Maouene, J., Riordan, B. & Smith, L.B. (2010) ‘The Associative Structure of Language: Contextual Diversity in Early Word Learning’, *Journal of Memory and Language*, 63(3), 259-273.

¹⁶³ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell (7).

land. We can observe it and then in our movements be observed by it, communicating this sense of relationship. Artists like Claude Lorraine or Nicholas Poussin taught, if somewhat indirectly through the legacy of their work, figures like Lady Chatterton in the language of landscape. Lady Chatterton has an understanding of these words based on that exchange. Of course an elite perspective or within that group, insofar as a grouping may be portioned off, a particular elite perspective is not all-telling and in terms of the articulation of a landscape reality there is no singular absolute response.

Pursuing an idea of varied responses as manifest in language, we see that a word, rather than communicating a single correct response, can communicate any number of responses. To insist on a single correct response or meaning, Jackson writes, “artificially freezes the dynamic of linguistic change at an arbitrary point in time.”¹⁶⁴ Essentially Wittgenstein’s early concept, at this stage, is inadequate in explaining the multiplicity of meanings that are derived from and invested in landscape. Spirn writes of the material landscape thus - it is not just a rock and a singular indisputably correct response:

Landscape materials, phenomena, and forms are emphatic, paradoxical, analogical: wind is an exaggerated breeze, water is yielding yet erosive, roses bloom and wither, so do humans. A rose is rarely just a rose; it is encrusted with meaning accreted through centuries of poetry, painting, gardens, and rituals of everyday life. And still roses are mined for fresh meanings by reformulation, surprising and provocative juxtapositions and combinations.¹⁶⁵

When we come to communicate these sedimented meanings we see that communicating a level of understanding requires knowing. Writing a critical reflection on Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations*, Rhees considers the knowing of the language between the two builders, claiming that what they say is part of a routine, belonging to a general operation or organization. It is driven by rules which are drawn up and followed. In this way he sees it as a potentially useful analogy in emphasizing the different forms discourse takes, but it does not elucidate clearly the meaning of participating in discourse.¹⁶⁶ The idea of finding the meaning of participating in discourse would seem to be beyond the language game but it does underline its use.

¹⁶⁴ Jackson, P. (1989) *Maps of Meaning*, London, Routledge, p.157.

¹⁶⁵ Spirn, A. (1998) *The Language of Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p.216.

¹⁶⁶ Rhees, R., Phillips, D.Z. (ed.) (1998) *Wittgenstein and the possibility of discourse*, Cambridge, CUP Archive, p.110ff.

The fluidity of expression which the language game allows precludes an absolutism in the meaning of participating in discourse. Participating in discourse can mean an infinite number of things depending on circumstance. As Kovecses and Koller argue, meaning is not pre-packaged in words but humans are active participants in constructing meaning in specific contexts.¹⁶⁷ Such constructs we might say are framed by the language game. The expressions we use find meaning as a result of the building and mapping of mental spaces.¹⁶⁸ In the relationship of human and land for instance meaning is fluid and changing through the illustration of its expression, an illustration illuminated in the use of the language game structure.

Nevertheless, with this idea of change and difference we can talk of ways of playing the game, ways of knowing and ways of seeing. Wittgenstein picks this up and demonstrates that knowledge, and language as a way of knowing and seeing, is built up over time. The primitivism of the earlier singular response to a singular word is built upon with the sedimented experiences of the individual. Concepts are created and handled. Words trigger a multiplicity of meanings particular to the individual. In other words the same game can be expressed in different ways.

Genova encapsulates this appreciation in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*: "Mapping the linguistic domain, the way of seeing, must be done slowly. Human, native cartographers, must walk among the concepts, handling and sorting them carefully."¹⁶⁹ When we read accounts of landscape, topographies and places we map a linguistic domain. We see the words assembled before us as a map and we make our way along, absorbing the words and filtering them through our own sedimented experience to produce meaning. The tools of our linguistic understanding work as a legend and we use this legend to geographically craft a way of landscape which creates a particular private meaningful cartography that exists in a tension with more general public idea of use. There is a general idea of what one can do and there is a particular way one chooses to do it. We can develop a sense of this idea through *Philosophical Investigations*:

¹⁶⁷ Kovecses, Z. & Koller, B. (2006) *Language, Mind and Culture: A Practical Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.* p.249.

¹⁶⁹ Genova, J. (1995) *Wittgenstein: A Way of Seeing*, London, Routledge, p.31.

I am trying to conduct you on tours in a certain country. I will try to show that the philosophical difficulties which arise in mathematics as elsewhere arise because we find ourselves in a strange town and do not know our way. So we must learn the topography by going from one place in the town to another, and from there to another and so on. And one must do this so often that one knows one's way, either immediately or pretty soon after looking around a bit, wherever one may be set down.¹⁷⁰

If we take someone as trying to conduct us on tours in a certain country, we must understand the language one uses so we can find our way in the country. Yet to find our way we must craft our own understanding from that language which may not be the same way of understanding as held by the tour guide. In the collectively inclusive activity of going from one town to the other for instance, ways of seeing, knowing and communicating are cultivated through individual experience and circumstance and the way different people live in different ways in the same 'certain country'.

Language and thinking and articulating through language, stimulate us to landscape. The range of possibilities we have to construct our reaction to a particular word prompted in a human-land relationship is conditioned throughout the living experience. Language is a medium which encourages us to observe, interpret and create by our own indeterminate criteria.

Language's capacity for producing pictures for instance is, as Genova illustrates, uncontrollable.¹⁷¹ For example when the writer writes something there is no fixed rule for how it is to be interpreted or what can be created from it. As Wittgenstein essentially says, it depends how one looks at it.

To the *philosophical* question: "Is the visual image of this tree composite, and what are its component parts?" the correct answer is: "That depends on what you understand by 'composite'" (And that is of course not an answer but a rejection of the question.)¹⁷²

"That depends" is a key phrase in crafting our understanding of how landscape works in terms of process. There is no right or wrong answer and it is this ambiguity or

¹⁷⁰ Diamond, C. (ed.) (1976) *Wittgenstein's Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics: Cambridge, 1939*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, p. 44. Cf. Genova (1995) op cit. pp. 31ff.

¹⁷¹ Genova (1995) op cit. p.69.

¹⁷² Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (47).

tension that emerges in opinion. It is a process that seeks out an absolutely right answer but can never arrive at it because of a dependency on circumstance. Perfection rejects imperfection because of this dependency. In the activity of doing landscape there is a continually elusive absolute or essential truth. Like any word 'landscape' is a vague and ambiguous term. There can be many different ways of understanding how landscape works, yet the word, in terms of the essential fabric of its letters does not change. There is the way in which the word appears and that is something couched in difference that masks sameness. Given that language is a process, the acquiring of language through inter-subjectivity and its expression in the individual level through filters of intra-subjectivity results in everything imbued with a caveat of ambiguity encapsulated in a phrase like: "depending on how you look at it".

Illustrating this idea further, Ralph Waldo Emerson writing with reference to the Latin author Virgil states: "Well, that author is a thousand books to a thousand persons."¹⁷³ So it is that there are innumerable different senses of what landscape means when its products or visual representations are compared. Landscape is nurtured and created by society and individuality, culture and nature and a sense of something processed and produced through tension in the integration of these elements.

Discourses of society, expressed through language, influence our attitude towards land and how we should view its various elements. Stedman Jones, in Jackson's *Maps of Meaning*, suggests "that experience cannot be abstracted from the language in which it is expressed; language structures and articulates experience, disrupting any simple notion of the unmediated determination of consciousness by existence."¹⁷⁴ The inherent capacity for difference and change in language challenges any supposition that a consciousness might be absolutely determined or of a fixed existence. This difference is illustrated by a communal element. The sum of what might be termed landscape "sociability" finds a unique expressive channel through the human related to land and

¹⁷³Emerson, R. (1908) 'Spiritual Laws' in Emerson, R. *Essays: First & Second Series*, London, J.M. Dent & Co. pp. 77-98, (p.87). Showing a similar idea that links artistic strands of the literary and painterly together, Michael Viney writes of a place called Mulgarve near his homestead in the west of Ireland. "There are a thousand paintings in the cleft of *maol-garbh*. I may get down to it, at last." Viney, M. & Viney, E. (1981) *Another Life Again*, Dublin, The Irish Times, p.145.

¹⁷⁴ Jackson (1989) op cit. p. 157.

beyond to other humans related to lands. There are degrees of landscape expression through the wider community collective and the individual but at every level social, political, cultural and economic circumstances are embedded. Let us consider then landscape expression in wider communities, defining and defined by individuals.

2.3 Communities and Expressions of the social art

Taking a step beyond the expressive individual and considering the idea of landscape expression in the communal sense, we can talk of linguistic communities that have a general linguistic rendering of particular landscapes. Shapin writes that “if a community is a group sharing a common life, *communication* is a means of making things common.”¹⁷⁵ Jackson writes extensively on this idea¹⁷⁶, citing Harrison and Livingstone’s work on language and subjectivity.¹⁷⁷ Jackson encapsulates the idea well in his reading of Harrison and Livingstone, noting how they illustrate

...the centrality of language in structuring people’s subjective experience and rendering what is experienced interpretable by a wider community. Language, they argue, is significant as the principal medium through which inter-subjective meaning is communicated, playing a crucial role in structuring people’s social and cultural identities.¹⁷⁸

Analysis of landscape from the angle of language enables us to access the subjectivities of collective communities and individuals through the core medium of expression. Through recognition of this medium in communities and individuals defining each other, it is apparent that it is part of the human condition to be social and integrated in civilisation.

As an expression of this idea let us consider Aristotle’s idea of the political. He illustrates the idea of man [sic.] as a political animal.

If the earlier forms of society are natural, so is the state, for it is the end of them, and the nature of a thing is its end. For what each thing is when fully

¹⁷⁵ Shapin, S. (1984) ‘Pump and Circumstance: Robert Boyle’s Literary Technology’, *Social Studies of Science*, 14 (4) 481-520, (pp.481-2).

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.* p.161.

¹⁷⁷ Harrison, R. T. & Livingstone, D.N. (1982) Understanding in geography: structuring the subjective, in Herbert, D.T. & Johnston, R.J. (eds.) *Geography and the Urban Environment: Vol. 5*, London, Wiley & Sons, pp. 1-39.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid* p.7 cf. Jackson (1989) p.161.

developed, we call its nature...Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal.¹⁷⁹

A “political animal” means an animal whose nature it is to live in the context of the social. Civilization is the natural state for the human animal. It is the natural state not in the sense that it is the original state, but in the sense that the natural goal of human development is life in cities or at the very least in communal structures in which general concepts, among which one might regard landscape and place, are nurtured in a non-linear fashion.¹⁸⁰ The significance of this understanding of politics is an appreciation of political dynamics at work in general as a human need for community. Thus a particular political agenda would inhibit an understanding of landscape as an abstract concept, logically weakening a more complete development of a landscape idea sought in this thesis. In other words there is a distinction between a particular way of landscape as an activity and what landscape is in the more general sense of a theory. Talking of a politics of landscape, it may be considered that there is an idea of landscape that is above political influence in the abstract or, perhaps more accurately, it is an abstract that is pre- or post- political, depending on how the politicised action of landscaping attempts at an abstract ideal. The perfect abstract is beyond the particularities of political ideology as it is apparent only through the material conditions of society and culture. In other words though the abstract may be above a particular politics, it is the attempts of a politics that ratifies the abstract as it is the idea that ratifies the particularity of an approach.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Aristotle, Everson, S. (ed.) (1988) *Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1252 b30-1253 a3.

¹⁸⁰ See McAllister, M. (1989) ‘Homeward Bound: Wilderness and Frontier in American Indian Literature’ in Mogen, D., Busby, M. & Bryant, P. (eds.) *The Frontier Experience and the American Dream: Essays on American Literature*, Texas: A&M University Press, pp.149-159: ‘Unlike the circular trip of the quester, permanent, linear departure is negative meaning for most folk cultures: banishment, exile, divorce from one’s community – they are, for the Greeks and the Hebrews as much as for most non-western cultures, fates equal to death. Expansion, the spreading of a people was normal, but the uprooting of a community, the casting out of an individual, the severance of one tribes connection to its parent stock – our very metaphors illustrate how undesirable they were.’ p.149

¹⁸¹ Cf. Gibbons, L. (1996) *Transformations in Irish Culture*, Cork, Cork University Press/Field Day, p.9: “For culture to be effective as ‘equipment for living’ in Kenneth Burke’s phrase, it has to be grounded in the material conditions of society, but this runs counter to those familiar currents within literary and cultural criticism which, under various invocations of ‘the aesthetic’, see the creative imagination as entirely transcending its social and political circumstances, gathering itself up, as Yeats expressed it, into ‘the artifice of eternity’. Though this approach sees itself as eschewing politics, in the past it has provided the rationale for a very distinctive colonial agenda.”

The different ways of doing landscape or landscaping, particularly as collectives, displays us as cultures.¹⁸² As Sauer wrote, “The cultural landscape is fashioned out of a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result.”¹⁸³ Developing this idea in terms of a landscape consciousness we might consider culture and nature exchanging roles of agency through the medium of landscape. In the collective activity of culture and nature then the idea of a particular ‘natural landscape’ as distinct from a ‘cultural landscape’ is an unnecessary delineation since both are subsumed indistinguishably in the activity of landscape. Rather than a cultural landscape then, perhaps one might talk of a culture of landscape. The creation and evolution of words, in themselves media, help to conceptualise landscape as a medium of subject and object, of culture and nature and of individual and community.

Landscape and word as medium and expressive of an Aristotelian political necessity can be illustrated through reconsideration of Wittgenstein’s builder. Cognate with this political communication and interaction through media is the idea of power. Power is a useful way of seeking out the mechanics of process in landscape. If the builder “A” said ‘beam’ to his assistant “B” and “B” then brought a ‘block’, then “B” would defy, consciously or not, the rules set out for him and would most likely be rebuked. This illustrates that language acts as an expression of power and politics at every social interaction. As language is not fixed, nor then is power fixed. It is constantly changing and dynamic. Just as the builder “A” depends on “B” to bring the beam so too does “B” depend on “A” to keep him in work perhaps. Essentially it is the prerogative of “B” to grant power to “A” for whatever reason. “B” may very well decide to throw the block on the ground and walk away. Power is interdependent, occupying different guises and ebbing and flowing with the passage of time and circumstance.

In this case it is conceivable that difference and circumstance preclude any definitive statement of governance since it is dependent on the will of the individual which itself is subject to change at any instant. For example, the writer is in a position of power

¹⁸² Meinig (1979) op cit. p.3.

¹⁸³ Sauer, C. (1925) ‘The Morphology of Landscape’, *University of California Publications in Geography*, 2, repr. in Leighly, J. (ed.) (1963), *Land and Life: A Selection of the Writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer*, Berkeley, University of California Press, p.46.

writing or narrating landscape but the writer's power is dependent on the reader reading the text and deriving a sense of meaning or purpose from it. Landscapes are themselves of a textual nature, exchanged, granted, accepted and rejected through the inherent sociability of culture. To come into existence landscape, as distinct from Nature¹⁸⁴, is dependent on the ebb and flow of cultural relations. Power, much like landscape, in its dynamism and movement is not easily capped with a clear definition. This then carries the problem of its potential loss and evaporation. Bourdieu's definition of power goes to the extreme of structural categorisation, considering power as an imposition of "the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and thereby *to make and unmake groups*."¹⁸⁵

Power and the way power can work to produce is a worthwhile consideration in terms of the production of landscape. Wylie has written that "writers such as Cosgrove, Daniels and Duncan only address half the story – how landscapes are consumed."¹⁸⁶ The other half of that story lies in how they are produced.¹⁸⁷ John Allen, writing in an attempt to recover the lost geographies of power, grapples with this issue.¹⁸⁸ Allen considers power 'a relational effect of social interaction'¹⁸⁹. As a result power may be considered performative rather than a boxed category. In other words, it varies with each usage and can be enacted in conceivably innumerable ways. This view consequently rejects the spatial vocabulary of centres and peripheries or centres and margins which Allen associates with Weber.¹⁹⁰ By the same token, Allen also rejects the radically decentred views of power associated with Foucault and Deleuze for their failure to specify different forms of power. This seems something of a paradox as the work appears to contend that power, by virtue of its status as not 'a thing' but rather 'a relational effect' should not take a specific form. This is similar in principle to a developing sense of landscape as something that takes form in action but yet does not

¹⁸⁴ Meinig (1979) op cit. p.2.

¹⁸⁵ Bourdieu, P., Thompson, J.B. (ed.) Raymond, G. & Adamson, M. (trans.) (1991) *Language and Symbolic Power*, Cambridge, Polity Press, p.221.

¹⁸⁶ Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, p.102.

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.* Cf. Mitchell, D. (1994) 'Landscape and Surplus Value: The Making of the Ordinary in Brentwood CA', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 12, 7-30.

¹⁸⁸ Allen, J. (2003) *Lost Geographies of Power*, Oxford, Blackwell.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.* p.2.

¹⁹⁰ *ibid.* p.36.

take form in definition. Perhaps it is this source of tension and paradox that gives landscape a progressive, creative momentum with temporary resolution in a product that illustrates landscape as a medium in the tangibility of its performance. On power, finding a middle-ground, Allen talks of ‘modalities’ of power that are spatially rendered in such a way that it is ‘the jumble of arrangements, the messy co-existences and awkward juxtapositions of power that characterise places.’¹⁹¹

It seems then that power comes together in place, to be experienced in specific ways in specific places. However it is insufficient to fill a place container with awkward jumbles and messes since leaving them to stagnate in such a container does not resolve the issue of power dynamics. Perhaps considering power through the idea of a fluid landscape medium may lead to an understanding of power through process that may, but not necessarily must, render as a product in place.

According to Allen, power is not everywhere but its relationships intersect differently in different places. In landscape terms, the communicated landscape products intersect differently in different places and stages to inform new landscape products. It is difficult to reconcile the idea that power is not everywhere and thus somewhere but yet cannot be properly quantified or distinguished. Henri Lefebvre extrapolates power as a phenomenon that is everywhere and cannot be substantially grasped. It is everywhere because of its malleability and the way it is manifest differently in different places.¹⁹²

Applying narratives of power to theories such as Wittgenstein’s language game is a pursuit of shadows as power and governance are manifest in different ways in different places through interactions of human and land in an individual and collective sense. Related to Allen then, different modes of power may apply as they intersect in different places and situations. Thus we might conclude cryptically that power is, as Lefebvre claims, everywhere but also nowhere.

Power, the power to maintain the relations of dependence and exploitation, does not keep to a defined ‘front’ at the strategic level, like a frontier on the map or a line of trenches on the ground. Power is everywhere; it is omnipresent, assigned to Being. It is everywhere in space. It is in everyday discourse and

¹⁹¹ *ibid.* p.159.

¹⁹² Lefebvre (1976) pp.86-87.

commonplace notions, as well as in police batons and armoured cars. It is in *objets d'art* as well as in missiles. It is in the diffuse preponderance of the 'visual', as well as in institutions such as school or parliament. It is in things as well as in signs (the signs of objects and object signs). Everywhere, and therefore nowhere... Power has extended its domain right into the interior of each individual, to the roots of consciousness, to the 'topias' hidden in the folds of subjectivity.¹⁹³

Soja writes that "few, including Foucault, ever made this super-charged relationship between space, knowledge and power so explicit and far-reaching."¹⁹⁴ It is the acknowledgement of power as a diffuse and ultimately elusive entity because of its omnipresence that illustrates the complex interactions resulting in the generation of power. If we consider a typical Lefebvrian dualism like centre-periphery, we can see that writer and reader exchange places between centre and periphery contributing to a rhythm or cyclicity of interaction which precludes singular permanence in its performance.¹⁹⁵ By these shifting criteria power is indicative of a wider landscape conceptualisation that involves at once both visibility and invisibility. This is in the sense that landscape is an activity carried out in potentially infinite different ways and therefore invisible but at the same time by some commonality that we can identify what the activity is when we talk of landscape.

Soja expands on this idea of centre-periphery exchange to involve a third element.¹⁹⁶ For Soja there is always the Other, a third space that disrupts the binary dualism and drives the movement of power resulting in the fluidity of boundaries between centre and periphery.¹⁹⁷ If we freeze time at a given moment we can see for example, the writer at the centre and the reader at the periphery. Words written and spoken construct that position but as the third mediating element, words will turn the position to reverse it or re-align it. Put another way, we might see human language at the centre and material land at the periphery with thought as the third element so that land shapes thought which in turn shapes the language of the human. Landscape as a social art sees

¹⁹³ Lefebvre, H., Bryant, F. (trans.) (1976) *The Survival of Capitalism*, London, Allison and Busby pp.86-7 in Soja, E. (1996) *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other Real and Imagined Places*, Oxford, Blackwell. p.31ff.

¹⁹⁴ Soja (1996) op cit. p. 32.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.* p.30.

¹⁹⁷ Lefebvre, H. (1980) *La Presence et l'absence: Contribution a la theorie des representations*, Paris, Casterman, p.143 in Soja, E. (1996) op. cit. p.31ff.

power surge quietly through channels of language, thought and material in search of definition itself, but ultimately defining the innumerably different ways in which land is shaped.

Power then can be understood as something invisible rather than lost. To take power as a subject in and of itself threatens to conceal a great deal of the social, cultural and historical processes that are developed in the circumstances of its realisation. This illustrates how it is insufficient to treat landscape as a theory in and of itself since the theory does not make itself readily apparent in everyday life. Understanding power helps to develop an understanding of how a form of landscape might be expressed. Power is a sort of present absence. The idea of landscape in the sense of a general theory may also be understood as a present absence in that it is not readily visible in a phenomenological reality, based as it is on the appearance of its action to the self.¹⁹⁸ In terms of the register of non-representational theory this is an idea related to the flesh and bone of human body and the soil, flora and fauna of land and the way this can appear in practice beyond representation. By a combination of human and land, each is taken beyond itself to something else in landscape. Tying representation to structure involves re-reading the idea of representation in terms of its production and its visible materiality.¹⁹⁹ The form has the capacity for manner.

Much of the meaning behind power and landscape as paradoxically everywhere and nowhere is due to its elusiveness through innumerably different ways of communicating language. Thus, let us consider the language game in a wider context than between singular individuals. Exploring this idea, Lyotard considers in *The Post-modern Condition* how each language has its own distinct narrative, creating an atomization of the social into flexible networks of language games.²⁰⁰ In other words, wider discursive influences

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Matless, D. (2000) 'Action and Noise over a Hundred years: The Making of a Nature Region', *Body and Society*, 6, 141-165.

¹⁹⁹ E.g. McCormack, D. (2002) 'A Paper with an Interest in Rhythm', *Geoforum*, 33, 469-485; Anderson, K. and Smith, S. (2001) 'Emotional Geographies', *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers*, 26(1), 7-10; Allon, F. & Anderson, K. (2009) 'Intimate Encounters: The Embodied Transnationalisms of Backpackers and Independent Travellers', *Population, Space and Place*, 16(1), 11-22; Thrift, N. & Dewsbury, J.D. (2000) 'Dead Geographies – and how to make them live', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 18, 411-432.

²⁰⁰ Lyotard, J. (1984) *The Post-Modern Condition*, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, p.17; Cf. also Jackson (1989) p.176: "The 'post-modern condition' clearly has a sociology and a geography that extend

work to shape language games and string together the various atoms created by the uniqueness of the individual perspective. The flexible networks of language games show the ebb and flow of dialogue across routes marked by wider discourses. The atomized individual is essential in the social process. As Basso writes “...senses of place, while always informed by bodies of local knowledge, are finally the possessions of particular individuals. People, not cultures, sense places...”²⁰¹ We might extend this into a cycle where the individual in return informs the bodies of wider local knowledge rendering landscape a social art. In the interrelationship of language games dialogic networks deriving from and expressive of circumstance are fundamental in the ways of making places and landscapes.

In tracing power through these processes we must consider Allen’s claim that power cannot flow through a network since it is an instrumental relational effect. However consideration of Foucault’s idea of productive power sees a paradox arise. Foucault’s ‘technologies of the self’ finds a definition of power as productive of the very categories of will and action that are restricted by instrumental forms of power.²⁰² In other words, they are reflexive practices that bring about a certain modality of existence. In defiance of resolution by its tension then presumably the certainty of such modes are impermanent or at least move through degrees of permanence. Everything requires the will and action of agency and outward connections of agencies to produce meaning or significance. Let us borrow an analogy of Wittgenstein’s to illustrate the need for dialogic networks within which power is imbued.

“I set the brake up by connecting rod and lever.” –Yes, given the whole of the rest of the mechanism. Only in conjunction with that is it a brake lever, and separated from its support it is not even a lever; it may be anything, or nothing.²⁰³

Atomized objects such as the rod and lever come together to form a mechanism, the mechanism then, in turn defines the atoms and their purpose. Landscape may be

well beyond the superficially ‘cultural’. But there have as yet been relatively few attempts to specify the relationship between post-modern culture and the changing contours of contemporary capitalism.”

²⁰¹ Basso, K. (1995) *Wisdom Sits in Places*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, pp.xv-xvi

²⁰² Foucault, M. (1988) ‘Technologies of the Self’ in Martin, L.H. *et al.* (1988) (eds.) *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, Boston, University of Massachusetts Press.

²⁰³ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (6).

understood as a mechanism within which atomized elements of human, land, language and circumstance coalesce. At one and the same time both implicit and explicit, power courses throughout the processes of the mechanism producing different outcomes. It is in this way that power works in a landscape relationship. There is an implicit power driving a creative force that makes itself explicit by what it ultimately creates. The ultimate creation however, is imperfect and consequently the creative space opens up again to spur on another creation. Power is enabled through the irremovable, though not irreducible distance between the elements in a relationship.

Without a concomitant and balancing sense of the absolute however, there is a danger of evaporation in invisibility and absence. Thus the following chapter will be concerned with reconciling ideas of presence and absence and generality and specificity through concepts of 'Being' and 'Becoming'. In ascribing a sense of absolute definition to landscape then, we might look to the idea of the abstract concept rather than the practical lived phenomenological realities. The following chapter explores ideas of apparent reality to illustrate that the differences in various apparent realities also embody some sense of commonality or sameness. We can know that we are landscaping on a fundamental, common abstract level but realising or performing that abstract in visibly, quite different ways. Part of the expression of landscape as medium and relationship may very well be found in a reconciliation of sameness and difference or abstract and action.²⁰⁴ In ontological terms we can talk of the existence of a knowledge of landscape while in epistemological terms or the types of that knowledge, it may be differentiated into related but distinct ideas of sameness through abstract scope, and difference through practical action. This chapter has been about the general idea of enactment or performance through language. The following chapter will be about the product of that performance and through a phenomenological understanding, as cultivated in the introductory chapter, the apparent and changing character of its reality.

²⁰⁴ Cf. Kidd, S. (2000) 'Landscape Planning at the Regional Scale' in Benson, J.F. & Roe, M. (eds.) *Landscape & Sustainability*, London, Routledge, pp.118-138. Berlan-Darque, M. et al. (2008) *Landscape: From Knowledge to Action*, France, Quae Editions, p.151ff. Johnson, M. (2007) *Ideas of Landscape*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.148ff.

Chapter Three: The Appearance of a Landscape Product

“...a journey into the wideness of language, a journey where each point of arrival - whether in one’s poetry or one’s life - turned out to be a stepping stone rather than a destination.”

- Seamus Heaney - *Crediting Poetry*²⁰⁵

3.1 Postcards from the Edge of Process

This chapter is about exploring the general idea of how the communicative processes that define landscape as process go towards the formation of an articulated landscape product. It also realises the potential for that product to be reproduced in a transformative sense through living experience. Observing the idea of language and landscape as medium, means that realities are something transmitted through this medium, making themselves apparent to the self. Exploring this idea of apparent reality, let us take the example of the postcard. If one were to send a postcard from Dingle, Co. Kerry to a person who had never been there before, the appearance of it or its reality is shaped for the person by the postcard through the material tangibility of the medium and the way that materiality appears to the senses of the individual.

Were the picture to be one of a sunny day, with a solitary cloud scudding along a blue sky over the dark green peninsula, perhaps with a couple of people walking around admiring the scenery or conversing at their leisure, and the corresponding note were to read “Hi All, Arrived yesterday, settling in well, weather is fine, see you when we get back!”, then this too, in spite of time discrepancies between the picture and the note²⁰⁶, or perhaps the fact that the writer had never been to that particular spot, nevertheless forms a sense of reality for the receiver of the card and also for the writer trying to communicate it.²⁰⁷ These realities are open to difference in their attempts to come to terms distance, negating it by filling it with a particular landscape reality. This is similar

²⁰⁵ Heaney, S. (1995) *Crediting Poetry*, Oldcastle, Gallery Books, p.11.

²⁰⁶ See Gillis, J. (2001) ‘Places Remoter and Islanded’, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 40 (1), 39-58 p.40.

²⁰⁷ See Wulff, H. (2007) *Dancing at the Crossroads: Memory and mobility in Ireland*, New York, Berghahn Books, p.63. See also O’ Connor, B., (1993) ‘Myth and Mirrors: Tourist Images and National Identity’ in O’Connor, B., & Cronin, M. (eds.) *Tourism in Ireland*, Cork, Cork University Press, p.70 and its consideration of how depictions on tourist brochures and postcards often depict people in leisurely conversation or cutting turf in a pre-modern setting, viewing Irish people as quaint or somehow backward, contributing to a negative view of the Irish themselves. See Duffy, P. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, p. 179 on how posters and postcards illustrating the Irish landscape for the past century have participated in a ‘lie of landscape’.

to issues like remoteness.²⁰⁸ As Gillis notes of this, there is a necessity to overcome remoteness by travelling through time to a pastness associated with an island whether it is in its history or not.²⁰⁹ In this respect we might consider the old postcard depicting a few cattle ambling down a narrow road with the caption 'Rush hour Ireland' as a nostalgic embrace that defies remoteness but may also be considered as an attempt at conviviality that misrepresents or misreads pastness thereby essentially *defining* rather than defying remoteness as it appears to do. The obdurate image of the postcard becomes home to diverse and potentially infinite realities.²¹⁰ This is well illustrated in the case of John Hinde whose photographs were altered to create a particular idyllic, materially non-existent rurality.²¹¹

The particular reality of the new postcard comes together with the circumstantial experiences of the individual who then forms another particular reality. Things come together and in their coming together something is created in a particular apparent reality. Communicating by the postcard, this formation of reality takes on an outward element beyond the individual when sender and receiver discuss the trip the postcard stands for. When the sender returns and the receiver asks about the trip and engages them in dialogue about it, the reality for both parties may be contested, adjusted and reformulated through the conduits of language and the perceived important or pertinent elements of the experience.²¹² Lowenthal discusses the factors that conspire to shape an individual's mental image of the 'real' world, considering what the individual elicits through experience, imagination and memory. This then has the effect of one

²⁰⁸ See Viney, M. & Viney E. (1981) 'Far-Off Voices' in *Another Life Again*, Dublin, The Irish Times, pp.49-51 on the relativity of remoteness. Ideas of what constitutes remoteness can vary from person to person.

²⁰⁹ Gillis (2001) op. cit. p.40.

²¹⁰ Cf. Brace, C. (2001) 'Publishing and publishers: towards an historical geography of countryside writing, c.1930-1950' *Area*, 33(3), 287-296 also, Brace, C. (1999) 'Gardenesque imagery in the representation of regional and national identity: the Cotswold garden of stone', *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 15(4), 365-376.

²¹¹ Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, p.180. On Hinde, see Gibbons, L. (1996) 'Back Projections: John Hinde and the New Nostalgia' in *Transformations in Irish Culture*, Cork, Cork University Press/Field Day, pp.37-43.

²¹² Cf. Grant, H.R. (1997) *Railroads in the Heartland: Steam and traction in the Golden Age of postcards*, Iowa, University of Iowa Press. Here, Grant utilizes over a hundred picture postcards in order to elucidate and analyse the ages of the railroads in mid-west America. The postcards provide clearly labelled signs towards bridges, tracks, signals, depots and docks accurately reflecting the most important railroad functions and its evolution.

individual not seeing the same things as another and thus developing a different sense of reality.²¹³ Realities are continually changing in appearance because they are substantially imperfect.

Landscape realities and truths are fluid and changeable. The postcard, like the poem or novel, forms an experience from which both parties derive, and will carry forward to contribute to and influence, future experiences. The Dingle postcard constructs a sense of a conceivable 'here' from a remote or less conceivable 'there'. Links are formed through journeys, whether real, imagined or, through a combination of both to make a sense of reality.²¹⁴ The performance of these links culminates in an apparent reality rather than an absolute one since there is always the potential for further revelation in communication and community.

Realising this propensity for difference through continued revelation is generated by context, Cosgrove warns of the shortcomings in the treatment of a landscape 'way of seeing' in a vacuum: "But historically and theoretically it is unsatisfactory to treat the landscape way of seeing in a vacuum, outside the context of a real historical world of productive human relations, and those between people and the world they inhabit to subsist."²¹⁵ Though in the context of quite a specific sensory way of landscape as a 'way of seeing', the idea of context is a useful way of highlighting the elements of human and land and how the particular context of their interaction forms a particular landscape reality.

In order for the human to interact with land one must carry out a series of dialogues with one's own past and present experiences as well as wider collective and circumstantial contexts to express a reality that will in its ongoing development produce future realities. Through the individual's dialogues with wider discourse and one's own unique experience as an atomized element, meaning is found in a symbiotic product of landscape, articulated through paths of words etched before but seen differently

²¹³ Lowenthal, D. (1961) 'Geography, Experience and Imagination', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51, (p.250).

²¹⁴ Nash, W. (1998) *Language and Creative Illusion*, New York, Addison Wesley Longman Inc. p.50.

²¹⁵ Cosgrove, D. (1984) *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, London, Croom Helm, p.2.

through the unique context of the individual experience. Illustrating this Heaney writes in the final stanza of his poem *Bogland*:

Every layer they strip
Seems camped on before.
The bogholes might be Atlantic seepage.
The wet centre is bottomless.²¹⁶

The observer interacts and fosters dialogue with these inscriptions. The uniqueness and potential of experience mean that the products and ways of meaning are infinite through the medium of landscape.

Reinforcing this idea, let us consider Bakhtin's concept of dialogue, since it accounts for this diversity through a fundamental atomisation. For Bakhtin, language contains the implications of previous users and indeed current ones, and relies on response to drive the social process thereby allowing interaction. Bakhtin considers the significance of interaction or dialogue in discourse thus:

The most important feature of the (linguistic) utterance, or at least the most neglected, is its dialogism, that is, its intertextual dimension. After Adam there are no nameless objects or any unused words. Intentional or not, all discourse is in dialogue with prior discourses on the same subject, as well as with discourses yet to come, whose reactions it foresees and anticipates. A single voice can make itself heard only by blending into the complex choir of other voices already in place. This is true not only of literature but of all discourse.²¹⁷

This conveys to us that there are many utterances and voices participating in communication. Dialogues between past, present and future, between individuals and within individuals themselves lead to the creation of landscapes. This illustrates a landscape mechanism as a collective consciousness of human and land in its process and abstractly unfinished product.²¹⁸

²¹⁶ Heaney, S. (1969) 'Bogland' in *Door into the Dark*, taken from Heaney, S. (1998) *Opened Ground: Poems 1966-1996*, London, Faber & Faber, p.4; appendix p. 283.

²¹⁷ Todorov, T. (1984) *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, p. x. See also Bakhtin, M.M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination*, Austin, University of Texas Press, p. 281.

²¹⁸ See Bakhtin's assertion that "[i]t is impossible to change the factual, thing-like side of the past, but the meaningful, expressive, speaking side can be changed, for it is unfinalized and does not coincide with itself (it is free)." Quoted in Morson, G.S. & Emerson, C. (1990) *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, California, Stanford University Press, p.230.

In coming to terms with this idea of mechanism in the context of interpretation, poetry and prose fiction are important geographical tools in helping us understand the production of landscape in the sense of both a product in the finished article and the process that goes into the making of the product. The tangibility of the text is a fixed point through which change flows. The words of the text are bones to be fleshed in different ways by different individual experiences. There is a relationship or a cyclical engagement between ideas of process and product. Landscape as process makes landscape as product. In turn then, the product is remade by this ongoing process or fluidity.

To reconcile landscape as constantly becoming and fluid as well as static and being, we must acknowledge that the movement of landscape is every bit as important as its substance. Landscape is continually uncovered and this requires a journey into and within language as it is our principal means of tracing and articulating discovered landscapes, while also our way to discover new ones. If we are participants in activity, then to name and elucidate that activity we must also have an abstract sense of what it is.

Expectations, beliefs, mindsets and preconceived notions guide particular discovery in the text. As we have illustrated, language influences observation, interpretation and the articulation of our own landscape realities. The fluidity of language, the loaded expression of each and every word defines the continuous conceptual change of landscape. It may be the case that the human geographer should elucidate a way of approaching text that creates a sense of infinite possibility in how the text as structure might be performed, enabling an infinity of potential meaning. The purpose then is not so much in looking for meaning in any structure but rather for use. How might the structure be of use in understanding the meaning of performance?

This feeds into a developing concept in relation to language: that one formulates thoughts on a particular topic, and then seeks a way to articulate those thoughts. Articulation may be a way but how that way is expressed is of infinite potential. The constancy of dialogue ensures the constancy of change. Rose rightly dismisses the idea

of a reality in which the given thing exists independently of a separate language.²¹⁹ Rather the given and the language used to express it are constantly bound together. One cannot exist without the other. In order to render an account of something one must be able to access a sense of language. It is through linguistic channels that we come to observe the use of text as a geographical tool, making available the fullness of communicative landscape for consideration in an idea of landscape both as abstract and action. Through such tension landscape is a constantly renewing journey in which landscape itself is its own destination and thus merely another step.

3.2 Fulfilling self in landscape: Process and Product

Seamus Heaney's words introducing the chapter help to illustrate the idea that in the wideness of language, both in an outward sense of quantity and an inner sense of quality. An arrival at the point of discovery opens up a new journey, at the end of which are new discoveries and beyond them yet more discoveries. In this first part of the thesis, entitled 'Observations', we are observing the articulations of someone like Heaney, thus embarking on a process that will culminate in a different articulation, an articulation that will find its voice in the final part 'Articulations'.

Landscape is made up of exploration and discovery. As soon as we discover a landscape through the processes of exploration we are guided by its light to explore further discoveries. Articulating these discoveries in language manifests their meaning. In developing this manifestation, language does not immediately assert itself. One cannot immediately articulate landscape. The articulation of landscape is a culmination of a process that involves the distillation of a nebulous, embryonic blur. Heaney illustrates this idea through a sense of "pre-verbal" in the making of a poem. As a like medium the making of landscape is illustrated well by this example, if not a little too well since there is a more conscious and deliberate divining of expression.

The crucial action is pre-verbal, to be able to allow the first alertness or come-hither, sensed in a blurred or incomplete way, to dilate and approach as a thought or a theme or a phrase. Frost put it this way: 'A poem begins as a lump

²¹⁹ Rose, C. (1980) 'Human Geography as Text Interpretation' in Buttimer, A & Seamon, D. (eds.) *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, London, Croom Helm, pp.123-135, (p.127).

in the throat, a homesickness, a lovesickness. It finds the thought and the thought finds the words.’²²⁰

Language is wielded in a conscious and considered way through a poetic context to express ideas, images and meanings that go beyond everyday or normal idiom, giving a voice that would otherwise not be there. By such an extreme example we can begin to identify an abstract sense of dynamic in landscape. When for example the poet goes beyond the ordinary patterns of language one is creating something new. Expressed as an outward communicative medium it engages with other landscape realities held by others, informing their landscapes and how they articulate them. This creative process involves a progression through various stages that move from thought within the individual to access language beyond oneself in community to, in turn, yield new thought and give the order of a name to chaotic nothingness. Expressing and naming this nothingness gives an emancipatory shape to thoughts in the minds of others. Shakespeare lucidly articulates this move from, what Heaney calls, feeling into words in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

As imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and lends to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.²²¹

The pre-verbal imagination acts as an initial stepping stone towards a tangible image or idea for articulation. It can be seen as a search for articulation which the speaker as medium of human and land makes on its journey into language. We might develop this into three sections or degrees of expression. These degrees of expression are the main generative force behind the thesis structure and thus the idea of landscape it promulgates.

1. The Pre-verbal i.e. the thought or preceding knowledge that seeks articulation
2. The Verbal i.e. the pre-existing discursive language available to the subject

²²⁰ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-60, (p.49).

²²¹ Shakespeare, W. Griffiths, T.R. (ed.) (1996) *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: Act v. 1.14-17.

3. The Articulation i.e. the rendering of the pre-verbal and verbal through the circumstances of the collective human/land self.

If for example we take a material quantity of landscape in the objective sense, we can say one observes or visualises a patch of green. One considers how to verbalise this, so one says 'field'. Articulating it one might personalize or render it to qualify the space by saying the 'green field'. Someone else might say the 'high field' and so on, thus the distinction between the interpretive sense of verbal and the articulation. It is perhaps best conceived of as a developing sense of closeness or involvement. A particularly salient example of this in the poetic context is Wordsworth's *Poems on the Naming of Places*. The following is an extract from the first poem in that series: 'It was an April Morning: Fresh and Clear'. The poet arrives in an unfamiliar glen. He is looking for things to describe and a way to describe them so he can articulate his experience of the glen. The concentration here is not on Wordsworth's life and times. It is rather on the simple and clinical manifestation of geography in a poem which gives expression to a human-land synthesis. In the frame of words and the wielding of language, Wordsworth moves through initial observation, a connection with nature as something new, interpretation and the anxiety of being environed and finally to articulation and what we might call the relief of knowing landscape through the comfort of words.

This is a particular expression of a general idea. It is included here as a means of illustrating how an articulation can bring about a new beginning when it is exposed to observation. A process may be seen at work whereby the poet moves through the three stages outlined above. The observable, particular reality of the poem informs a general understanding.

At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock
The stream, so ardent in its course before,
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
Which I till then had heard, appear'd the voice
Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the lamb,
The Shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
Vied with this waterfall, and made a song
Which, while I listen'd, seem'd like the wild growth

Or like some natural produce of the air
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here,
 But 'twas the foliage of the rocks, the birch,
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze:
 And on a summit, distant a short space,
 By any who should look beyond the dell,
 A single mountain Cottage might be seen.
 I gaz'd and gaz'd, and to myself I said,
 'Our thoughts at least are ours; and this wild nook,
 My Emma, I will dedicate to thee.' Soon did the spot become
 my other home,
 My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
 And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
 To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
 Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
 Years after we are gone and in our graves,
 When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
 May call it by the name of Emma's Dell.²²²

This poem helps to, as Muir writes in the non-contemporary but nonetheless telling (in terms of discursive consistency) context of modern globalisation, “magnify a longing for identity and roots”²²³. This sense of conceptual similarity transcends temporal and experiential circumstances. Thus we can consider a sense of figural similarity in the makeup of human and thus landscape conditions. The purpose of developing a landscape relationship may be the same as its manifestation may be different. In Wordsworth's 'It was an April Morning: Fresh and Clear', we can see the broad idea of developing closeness and connectivity illustrated. The wildness of the glen is by the end soothed by the poet's wording of the glen and by his personalizing of it as “Emma's Dell”. This idea of landscape embodies consistency in that we can say the poet is landscaping in the early 19th century as we might relate to the idea of landscaping today when we ourselves landscape in the sense of a verb. The commonality of a fundamental human need to relate is rendered in the differing circumstances of how we relate to land and indeed to each other.

²²² Wordsworth, W. (1904 repr. 2008) 'It was an April Morning: Fresh and Clear' in Wordsworth, W. *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth: vol. II -1798-1800*, New York, Cosimo Books, pp. 299-300; appendix p. 275.

²²³ Muir, R. (2000) *The New Reading the Landscape: Fieldwork in Landscape History*, Exeter, University of Exeter Press, p.xiii. This comparison is drawn to illustrate thematic continuity or the way different appearances have underlying commonalities that endure over time.

We can observe how the poet tries to become involved in landscape. He searches for a way to imprint identity upon it and to realize his part of it. In order to achieve this, he “listen’d” and “gaz’d and gaz’d”, till he could imprint his own sense of meaning upon it. Once he decides to dedicate it to his “Emma”, the spot becomes his other home. He has established a relationship with the wild nook and so he has a sense of home when he goes there and some sense of existence he hopes will continue years after they are gone.

This idea of relationship and avoiding alienation from the world is expressed through existentialist philosophy²²⁴, in particular that of Sartre. For Sartre, this sense of dread or alienation from the world is seen as an essential part of the human condition.²²⁵ The existential dread of the poet in the passage of Wordsworth above is all too apparent. Existential dread results from the feeling that we are entirely different from everything else we experience, overwhelmed by its enormity and the futility of reason in an irrational world. For the poet, the glen is wild and unknowable through its initial lack of categorization. When he can attribute familiarity to it in the form of the attendant sounds of the glen, the wild grows increasingly familiar. The listening and gazing is the poet making the world of objects comprehensible so he can baptise it with a status and meaning of local specificity. Through a conflation of the attentive subject and the material object through language, the medium of landscape imbues meaning in the specificity of place. The landscape is given a voice as the subject interacts with it. As Sartre writes, “[w]hen knowledge and feeling are oriented toward something real, actually perceived, the thing, like a reflector, returns the light it has received from it. As a result of this continual interaction, meaning is continually enriched at the same time as the object soaks up affective qualities.”²²⁶

²²⁴ See Johnston, R.J. et al. (eds.) (2000; 4th ed.) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.242.

²²⁵ Sartre, J.P. (1969 c. 1958) *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, London, Methuen. See Barrett, W. (1958) *Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy*, New York, Anchor and a discussion of existential dread as being “alienation and estrangement; a sense of the basic fragility and contingency of human life; the impotence of reason confronted by the depths of existence; the threat of Nothingness, and the solitary and unsheltered condition of the individual before this threat.” p. 36.

²²⁶ Sartre, J. P., Cumming, R. (ed.) (1965) *The Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre*, New York, Vintage Books, p.89. See also Basso, K. (1995) *Wisdom Sits in Places*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, p.108ff.

In relating to material landscapes there is a necessity to alleviate the dread and anxiety of consciousness and nurture the growth of what was wild into a full consciousness of landscape. Examples of this line of thought can be seen in the work of Yi-Fu Tuan who was vitally concerned with environment and place, putting major emphasis on the environmental imagination, pointing to an affective bond that exists between people and place, considering how humans respond to environment in different ways from the visual and aesthetic to physical contact with the material landscape.²²⁷ In considering how topophilia is not merely a response to place but an active production of place, Tuan affirms the illustrative purpose of Wordsworth's poem quoted above.

Similarly expressive of this is Edward Relph who argues that a practical 'knowing' of places is essential to human existence. Attachment to place and taking steps to form that attachment are expressive of an important human need. Placelessness, considered the increasing homogeneity and standardisation that diminishes the heterogeneity and variety of locality and therefore place, is something to be fearful of.²²⁸ Existentialist philosophy and, more specifically, existential phenomenology are key examples of the trends and intent of the humanistic school of geography in the 1970's to seek a more expansive and literate interpretation of human agency and its capabilities through the emotional engagement of the individual.²²⁹

The illustration of this idea in Wordsworth's work expresses the locally specific and grounded view that is demanded of existentialism.²³⁰ Specificity and the uniqueness of each individual's experience in the world acknowledge the creation of individual and private geographies which find their genesis in the lived experiences of the individual as a political animal. The conceivable perception of existentialism being limited or handicapped by specific and local views is offset by an emphasis on self-transformation

²²⁷ Tuan, Y. F. (1974) *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes and Values*, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall.

²²⁸ Relph, E. (1976) *Place and Placelessness*, London, Pion. See Duncan, J. (2000) 'Placelessness' in Johnston, R.J. et al (eds.) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford, Blackwell pp. 585-586. See Cresswell, T. (2004) *Place: A Short Introduction*, pp.18-24. See Tuan, Y.F. (1980) *Landscapes of Fear*, Oxford Blackwell.

²²⁹ See Holloway, L., & Hubbard, P. (2001) *People and Place: The Extraordinary Geographies of Everyday Life*, London, Pearson Education, p.68ff.

²³⁰ Hubbard, P. et al. (2002) *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory and Contemporary Human Geography*, New York, Continuum, p.38.

rather than self-recapitulation, thus encouraging stylistic rather than analytical energies. The emphasis is on stimulating the enactment of the individual's dynamic or rhythmic relationship to past and present self-images of the material landscape.²³¹

This existential approach however, still relies on the idea of landscape as material and acted upon. Thus the idea of self is exclusively human-centred and change finds its impetus from human initiative rather than a sense of symbiosis between human and land. Nevertheless the idea of stylistic energies usefully implies a way of doing rather than analysis of doing in developing a sense of abstraction.

Change, renewal and re-evaluation are constant elements in relating to the material landscape. In the space of the passage from Wordsworth's 'It was an April Morning: Fresh and Clear' above we can identify a stylistic energy in that the poet goes from a nebulous gathering of disparate elements that are collectively unknown to a familiarity and, ultimately to a desire of the place. When Wordsworth identifies a landscape as place, he develops a sense of intimacy in an environment of which he finds himself a part. Having found and articulated a qualitative reality, he then lives in it. In the course of which living a sense of change carries over time as the poet encounters new experiences and discoveries in the exploration of a landscape relationship.

Expanding this sense of dynamic further, new or changing features and prompts in the collective landscape relationship have the potential to reinvigorate and transform so that one distils a sense of collective knowing by different means. Thus the purpose of maintaining a sense of self though landscape may remain the same but the action, circumstance and meaning of fulfilling that purpose may change.

The specificity and uniqueness of experience is well illustrated in a poetics of landscape. Not only is the perspective one of an individual as a collective of human and land but by pushing the ordinary conventions of language use, change and malleability are ostensibly ever present. This ensures a continually developing synergetic landscape

²³¹ Sheringham, M. (1991) *French Autobiography: Devices and Desires: Rousseau to Perec*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.245.

process that develops a sense of intimacy.²³² Establishing language as the core expressive and interpretive tool enables a tangible accessibility to a sense of knowing. Interpreting the text is a key aspect of human geographical inquiry and the benefits of a literary context must not be underestimated for the abstract and practical concepts it can contribute in the development of a landscape consciousness.

3.3 Doors into darkness: Vagueness and ambiguity in Landscape

Throughout this chapter has been a developing and conflicting sense of sameness and difference. This realisation is developed through the idea of language and its idiosyncrasies. The most relevant of these is the idea that a singular word can generate potentially infinite aspects of sense and embodiment though it remains itself composed in the same letters. This is perhaps best illustrated by the ironic employment of an increased number of different words or synonyms to specify a point. In this regard we might talk of language's vagueness or ambiguity.²³³ These essential elements in language, traditionally viewed in the negative, are here looked upon as positives that enable creative activity. Rather than being obstacles, they are enhancements to individual understanding and the connective process. Vagueness and ambiguity lend themselves to develop a landscape reality in a unique way. Ambiguity provides thought, allowing space for interpretation and thus developing creative movement and flux.

If we return to Wittgenstein's builders "A" and "B", and "A" says to "B" "beam", "B" may look and see a number of different beams. Then he must ask "A" which beam he is to go for. "A" will reply in descriptive terms. He might say "the big beam" or "the small beam" or comparatively, "the bigger beam" or "the smaller beam". In fact, "A" might pre-empt this and outline the beam in initially descriptive terms in order to avoid a different interpretation to what he understands. There is potential that "B" may carry out the activity of bringing a beam to "A" in a different manner to what "A" intended.

²³² Cf. Agnew, J., Livingstone, D.N., & Rogers, A. (1996) *Human Geography: An Essential Anthology*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.193 Cf. also Wrigley, E. (1965) 'Changes in the Philosophy of Geography' pp.3-20 in Chorley, R. & Haggett P. (eds.) *Frontiers in Geographical Teaching*, London, Methuen.

²³³ For a treatment of lexical ambiguity in the psychology of language, see Harley, T. (2001) *The Psychology of Language: From Data to Theory*, New York, Taylor & Francis, pp. 168-176.

This is something that people are accustomed to on a daily basis, illustrated in paraphrasing or rewording sentences and communications in order to reduce as far as possible the margin for perceived error. Essentially, vagueness and ambiguity are constituent properties of language. The ways in which we learn language and the ways we craft interpretive meaning through the uniqueness of our vision and experience result in an inevitable degree of vagueness and ambiguity in descriptive terms.

This is illustrated by the example of Emerson's idea that a book is a thousand books to a thousand persons. Illustrated further he asks one in another essay to "Take the book into your two hands and read your eyes out; you will never find what I find."²³⁴ Given the potentially infinite number of persons to participate in ways of landscape, illustrated by ways of reading in the written text, one may be concerned that this infinite multiplicity might evaporate in a limitless quantitative space. This capacity for infinity however is a source of continuing validity that prevents an objective redundancy. One knows that there is a standard potential for multiplicity but one does not know in what particular way it will manifest itself in a particular circumstance.

Thus the word 'Landscape' itself is an abstract and set quantitative space that can potentially be reconciled with a qualitative sense of becoming and flux. No one could view the dell as Wordsworth did but we can know abstractly that he is viewing a dell. Landscape depends on change to solidify it as a concept. The limitless body of interpretative meanings and structures is an essential characteristic of landscape. In reading and writing and hearing and speaking landscape, we communicate not only that we are conceptually doing landscape but also in articulation we illustrate in some way how we are doing landscape.

Further illustrating this we shall take an example from the material landscape, as it may be objectively understood. "A field" is a vague term. It conveys only a general meaning that we make specific with the help of past knowledge and the context in which it is said. For example "a field" can mean anything from a piece of land to an

²³⁴ Emerson, R. (1908) 'Spiritual Laws' in Emerson, R. *Essays: First & Second Series*, London, J.M. Dent & Co. pp. 77-98, (p.87).

area of study. Vagueness lies in the generality of the term. In context, a field, for example “a green field” takes on ambiguity in that it carries multiple meanings regarding the colour, size and nature of the field. In this sense the field is a singular term that takes on a broad potential in ambiguity. In the context of this study, and its focus on developing landscape, vagueness and ambiguity work to our advantage in illustrating the fluidity of landscape through the renditions of a singular term. An example of this sense of advantage is in the symbolic language of literature that is the richer for its vagueness and ambiguity as it is helping to engage and activate diverse interaction through a general worded template.

For example Wordsworth in ‘It was an April Morning: Fresh and Clear’ examined above, mentions “Green leaves”. What shade of green could they be?²³⁵ What size and shape; of what tree? What season? As part of what environment? This is also illustrated in a poem of Robert Frost’s ‘Mending Wall’ which will be explored in more detail in due course.. But to discuss it initially, the poem carries direct ambiguity from the first line: “*Something* there is that doesn’t love a wall”. What could the something be? The intrinsic vagueness and ambiguity fulfil a poem and a landscape articulation, enabling us to engage in a relationship with our unique experience, circumstance and imagination.²³⁶ The activity of observing, experiencing, engaging and interpreting finds its articulation in language. This is the essence of journey in landscape, moving through channels of verbalization and articulation in the prompted stimuli of and from, both human and land.

In light of a sense of journey from stepping stone to stepping stone, or the constant becoming of meaning, we should elucidate landscape in its fullest sense of conceptual abstract and practical activity before we can proceed further. If we consider landscape,

²³⁵ There are at least forty in Ireland if the song by Johnny Cash is to be believed! Johnny Cash, ‘Forty Shades of Green’, on the album *Ring of Fire: The Best of Johnny Cash* (1963) E.g. ‘the moorlands and meadows and their Forty Shades of Green’. See McNally, F. (2011) ‘An Irishman’s Diary’, *Irish Times*, February 26th 2011, p.14. For consideration of music as a contribution to identity in the context of the county see Gillmor, D. (2003) ‘The county: designation, identity and loyalty’ in Hourihane, J. *Engaging spaces: people, place and space from an Irish perspective*, Dublin, Lilliput Press, pp.45 – 60.

²³⁶ See Beyth-Marom, R. & Dekel, S. (1985) ‘Defining the Uncertain situation’ in Beyth-Marom, R. & Dekel, S., *Thinking Under Uncertainty: An Elementary Approach*, Philadelphia, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 15-22.

do we consider it as Meinig does and consider ten salient and distinct versions of the same scene²³⁷ or do we look beyond that to find a more universal concept of landscape that contains such distinctions within it rather than looking outward to catch all possibilities and meanings in our sight?

Meinig's chapter 'The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene', considers landscape as Nature; landscape as Habitat; landscape as Artefact; landscape as System; landscape as Problem; landscape as Wealth; landscape as Ideology; landscape as History; landscape as Place and finally, landscape as Aesthetic. He also acknowledges at the end of the chapter that "Ten landscapes do not exhaust the possibilities of such a scene, but they do suggest something of the complexities of the topic".²³⁸ This underlines for us in categorical terms the subjectivity of landscape. In order for landscape to exist it must in some way be constituted of human consciousness. It must be seen, considered, packaged and experienced. Without a human element, landscape ceases to be.

We should look beyond, or, rather more accurately, behind, the ten categorical versions of the same scene to look at the nature of the existence of landscape in a broad conceptual sense as part of which such versions move. The idea of landscape as ideology or landscape as history for instance is about history and ideology before it is about landscape. If one should wish to make such delineations as between history and ideology for instance they should be *of* landscape and thus imbued with an opportunity to integrate as circumstance and experience might embody. Bate, despite a belief in the limited reach of geography, illustrates this idea of landscape in the context of poetics.

The poet's way of articulating the relationship between human-kind and environment, person and place, is peculiar because it is experiential, not descriptive. Whereas the biologist, the geographer and the green activist have narratives of dwelling, a poem may be a revelation of dwelling. Such a claim is phenomenological before it is political...²³⁹

²³⁷ Meinig, D.W. (1979) 'The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene' in Meinig, D.W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 33-48.

²³⁸ Meinig (1979) op cit. p.47.

²³⁹ Cf. Bate (2000) *The Song of the Earth*, Harvard, Harvard University Press p.266.

Bate's distinction between the experiential and the descriptive is a pertinent one. Description is a way of rendering landscape in narrative terms while experience is a way of rendering in revelatory terms. Realizing this distinction in terms of language, landscape as a noun may be considered descriptive while as a verb it may be considered revelatory. The noun 'landscape' implies objective distance, something that is distinct from a human subject. Understanding landscape in terms of becoming as well as being is perhaps achieved through considering landscape in the additional sense of a verb that constitutes an element of human participation in something rather than referral to an object. The nuances of this distinction are important in realizing the extent of the landscape concept. In something of a trade-off, by understanding landscape exclusively as a verb it loses a potential sense of abstraction implied by the objectivity of the noun. To realize landscape as a complete concept these paradoxical elements form an alliance. The letters of the word are its fixed structure while the reading and embodiment of those words are in flux.

While language offers a door into the unknown dark, its inherent ambiguities enable journeys of discovery and an unconcealment of hidden tensions in words. As Burenhult and Levinson note, there is a certain ambiguity in landscape terms that resides between object and place.²⁴⁰ Elaborating this idea they use the example of the forest: "The forest is huge', *the forest* is an object, in 'The ruin is in the forest', *the forest* becomes a place, with special semantic and syntactic properties."²⁴¹ On a more fundamental level landscape terms and therefore landscapes in general, move between subject and object and being and becoming. Thus there is a sense of tension between flux and stasis that is continually generating a kind of universality in its ambiguity. This usefully allows us to conceptualise what an abstract of landscape consciousness might involve and how it may function.

²⁴⁰ Burenhult, N. & Levinson, S.C. (2008) 'Language and landscape: geographical ontology in cross-linguistic perspective' *Language Sciences*, 30, 135–150.

²⁴¹ *ibid*, p.137. See also Lyons, J. (1977) *Semantics, Vols. I and II*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

3.4 Being, Becoming and the embodiment of landscape truths: Plato and Heidegger

This idea of change or becoming offers a further dimension to landscape in that it moves beyond the idea of landscape as static or an immutable truth, acknowledging that landscape is some sort of combination of both being and becoming. This is the case since without the firmness of being it is a concept difficult to grasp and conversely without the fluidity of becoming landscape is confusingly elusive.

A useful way of resolving fixity and fluidity in the idea of landscape is to divide landscape into its two constituent elements: that is 'land' and 'scape'; if we take 'land' as characteristic of being in the sense that we can conceive of an agreeable truth or definition of 'land' and we take 'scape' and its relative 'shape', then we may conceive of the human activity of 'shaping' and a verbally implied continuous human act. 'Landscape' thus embodies both stasis and flux.

Consider for instance Ingold for whom landscape is understood both as "the everyday project of dwelling in the world"²⁴² as well as a world "known to those who dwell therein."²⁴³ Landscape is both something continuing in the everyday while it is also something known in a more rooted sense. Relating both these characteristics, there is a sense of relative motion developed through an absolute sense of knowing or dwelling. Everyday change passes through this fundamental knowing. We can see change and movement because it is relative to an abstract knowing. Movement does not evaporate from sense because we have a state of fixity in which we can know it.

Landscape is a concept understood not in the particulars of physical objects and subjects but in the events of human engagement where subjects and objects, by virtue of their engagement become something beyond themselves. For example the act of walking is defined by both human and land. One cannot walk without land to walk

²⁴² Ingold, T. (2000) 'The Temporality of the Landscape' in Ingold, T. *The Perception of the Environment*, London, Routledge, pp.189-209, (p.191).

²⁴³ *ibid*, p.193.

upon. Thus walking, as an example, is a way of landscaping that is possible only through a relationship of human and land. How that relationship may be manifest is in the experiential circumstance of the hypothetical walk. The walk may for example, be pleasant or unpleasant thus allowing the potential for landscape to be produced in a new manifestation by the particularity of its experience.

Conceptually, landscape may be considered as something abstract, perhaps even metaphysical. It may be, as an abstraction considered in isolation from the objects such as the fields, the roads, the paths, the trees, the buildings and subject matter that ordinarily define it. Such a concept of landscape then is ahistorical and asocial. What counts are indivisible qualities or essential truths which transcend space and time to embody a coherent universality. Such qualities must be observed by getting through the illusory images thrown up by specific times, places and groupings. The only reality is an abstract kernel which is common throughout all circumstances. Finding this commonality in landscape may develop it as a kind of universal abstraction. The differences thrown up by apparent surface structures and tangibilities are illusory presences that cloud or divert focus from the invisible landscape abstraction. This idea is derived from a Platonic philosophical concept of 'Being' where the reality of being is invisible to our human world, and all things in our human world are but copies of an immutable metaphysical truth. This is reminiscent of the Lefebvrian idea of power as everywhere and nowhere since in its invisibility it is removed from tangible experience and circumstance.

The 'Being' of landscape is its power, its force and the land that stands firm as a mountain through which a river shapes its way. In other words we can talk of landscape ontologically as solely a concept of being but to do so is to imprison it and not to realise its full dimensional possibility in becoming and flux. On the one hand there is need for a discernable reality but on the other there is need for the freedom to illuminate difference and thus the dynamic variability of reality that is also arguably an irreducible characteristic of landscape. 'Being' is useful in illuminating the circumstance of landscape for what it is but not its manifest experienced practice.

Let us consider how Plato dealt with such a problem in his *Theaetetus*. Plato notes that one cannot say that something “is” in any absolute sense because interpretation and perception mean that such ideas can always be challenged.²⁴⁴ In respect of this then, matter, be it a material landscape or some such other, is “becoming” as a result of the movement and changes imposed by perspectives of experience.

Nothing is one in itself nor can you rightly say that it is something or other or that it is of a certain sort. Quite the contrary. If you can say that it is large it will be found also to be small; if heavy also light; and so on through all. For nothing is one or something or one of any definite sort. All the things which we customarily say “are” are becoming as a result of the movement and change and blending of one with another.²⁴⁵

This idea of blending helps to illustrate for us the fact that landscape as an entity is something that is in constant motion. Landscape is a process of blending and in its product is blended outward one with another. These go to form temporary landscapes from which new circumstances and experiences reshape and reconstruct us in landscapes. If we apply this idea to a tree for example, we cannot say absolutely and indisputably that a tree is large. One person may say the tree is large, but another person may dispute this claim and say that the tree is not particularly large at all. Following this then there may be a dialogue intending to reach a compromise, in the event of which another comes along and disputes the compromise. Beyond this, have we any sense of what a tree in its essential being is? The tree is constantly reformulated through the performance of experience and communication. In this way then we can say that the tree is in a state of constant becoming yet we do not say at any stage that it is not a tree.

This is an expression of the dynamic of landscape as a universal. It is a blend of both abstraction and practice. The tree looks different without necessarily being different. The landscape then may be performed differently. It may be different in how it is then manifest, but not necessarily different in being what it is as an abstract. This is to say that it has an underlying sameness in that it is identifiable as landscape. As an illustrative example of this, Plato talks about this idea of appearance and being. There is difference

²⁴⁴ Cf. Glacken, C.J. (1967) *Traces on the Rhodian Shore*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

²⁴⁵ Plato, Levett, M.J. (trans.) (1992) *Theaetetus*, Indianapolis, Hackett Publications, 152d-e.

and yet there is no difference. There is the ideal form and the visible reality. There is no ideal way of looking at something. The thing itself has some elusive kernel of fundamental being, an ideal constant that belies superficially different ways of looking.

If you look at a bed, or anything else, sideways or endways or from some other angle, does it make any difference to the bed? Isn't it merely that it looks different, without being different? And similarly with other things.²⁴⁶

In seeing the landscape, we see from different angles and our experiences and circumstances over the motion of time influence how we landscape. Landscapes and their truths are revealed through the light of experience. Looking at the bed from different angles exposes aspects of truth, values that are not in themselves absolute realities. In the same way, to look at a tree from different angles is to expose values and realities that are expressive of landscape. This demonstrates an accessible mode of interaction with the material world. In this way realities and truths are formed, developed and expressed through collective circumstances of experience in human-land relationships. Such circumstances see the embodiment of landscape as a social art and their expression opens constant dialogue in a constant becoming that sees a singular relative, but not absolute, reality emerge.

Let us explore this idea further and consider Plato's ideas relating to truth and reality as developed by Heidegger. Firstly, Heidegger's posit of truth as 'the unconcealed' as well as 'the correct' is conducive to a notion of the relativity of truth and the way landscapes embody a sense of truth when they are made apparent. Secondly, Heidegger's interpretation demonstrates at first hand the benefits of ambiguity in making the text accessible. Heidegger engages with the ambiguities in the Platonic text to construct his interpretive reading which leads to the idea of an alternative, but not unrelated, meaning of the word 'truth'. The word 'truth' itself is engaged and explored in the context of commonality and correctness. Plato's *Theaetetus* and *Republic* provide an opportunity for developing and awakening interpretive questions.

²⁴⁶ Plato, Lee, D. (trans.) (1955) *Republic*, London, Penguin Books, 598a.

For Heidegger, Plato's perceived common sense of truth grants the term a self-evident and a taken-for-granted obviousness that misses out on the complete sense of the word. "Common sense has its own necessity; it asserts its rights with the weapon peculiarly suitable to it, namely appeal to the obviousness of its claims and considerations...Common sense is blind to what philosophy sets before its essential vision."²⁴⁷ Therefore we might infer that the necessity of common sense is in becoming while it is blind to the essential vision of being. Developing this Heidegger claims that

Truth is no longer as it was *qua* unhiddenness, the fundamental trait of being itself. Instead, as a consequence of getting yoked under the idea, truth has become correctness, and henceforth it will be a characteristic of the knowing of beings. Ever since, there has been a striving for 'truth' in the sense of the correctness of the gaze and the correctness of its direction.²⁴⁸

Heidegger believes that the idea of 'truth' did not acquire self-evident obviousness with Plato himself, but rather set the tone for a future narrowness of meaning. Exploring the semantic foundations of preconceived truth, Heidegger establishes a more complete sense of the word that enables a more complete sense of self or *Dasein*. This practice is particularly apt in developing a sense in a singular word of the complete symbiosis of humans and land in a way that considers commonality of becoming and correctness of being as the Heideggerian concept does.

Let us consider the idea that what we understand by a particular word can shift and drift over time and perhaps eventually obscure the fundamental meaning of the word.²⁴⁹ Heidegger saw a necessity to explore the foundations of the meaning of truth in order to present a valid meaning which encapsulates the fundamental sense of the word. To this end, he observes the original Greek word for truth in the Platonic text, *aletheia*, and

²⁴⁷ Heidegger, M., Sallis, J. (trans.) (1998) 'On the Essence of Truth' in Heidegger, M., McNeill, W. (ed.) *Pathmarks*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 136-155 (p.136-7).

²⁴⁸ Heidegger, M., Sheehan, T. (trans.) (1998) 'Plato's Doctrine of Truth' in Heidegger, M., McNeill, W. (ed.) *op cit.*, pp. 155-183 (p.179).

²⁴⁹ On the risk of obscuring in relation to the meaning of truth, see Nietzsche, F. (2006) 'On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense' in Ansell Pearson, K. & Large, D. (eds.) Breazeale, D. (trans.) *The Nietzsche Reader*, Malden, MA, Blackwell: "What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins that have lost their embossing and now are considered metal and no longer as coins." p.117.

re-establishes the fundamental meaning of the word as unhiddenness or unconcealedness. This can be elucidated in an etymology of ‘substance’ that conveys a sense of ‘underneath’ and ‘concealed underneath’. If one considers the Latin and Greek prepositional components *sub* and *hypo* meaning ‘under’ in *substantia* and *hypostasis* respectively, this leads to ‘substance’ in the English, essentially conveying an idea of essence, or truth even, concealed under something.²⁵⁰

If we translate *aletheia* as “unconcealment” rather than “truth”, this translation is not merely “more literal”; it contains the directive to rethink the ordinary concept of truth in the sense of the correctness of statements and to think it back to that still uncomprehended disclosedness and disclosure of beings.²⁵¹

The sense of the word *aletheia* as ‘truth’ is related, Heidegger believes, with a sense of unhiddenness through a substantial logical correctness. It is a revelatory term. Truth is something that was hidden all along but now revealed. In terms of practicing this sense of truth as unconcealedness or unhiddenness, Heidegger writes “instead of speaking about it in general terms, we want to attempt it.”²⁵² So speaking about truth in abstract or general terms is quite difficult in the everyday context since there is no absolute understanding of truth. This is because there is a continuing potential for revelation. Each revelation of truth is an attempt at an absolute that cannot be realised. The idea of an absolute truth takes on something of a metaphysical significance.

Developing this idea for a concept of landscape, it may be understood that the activity of landscape is continual attempting of a more general abstraction which cannot definitively be expressed in everyday action. Landscape as hidden or concealed imbues it with a sense of truth that accounts for its discovery and ongoing development as attempts and productions of realities lead on to further discovery. Such truths lead to attunement and with that attunement comes an apparent landscape product. Landscape truths are unconcealed in new and different ways with the contingency of time and experience and living attunement.

²⁵⁰ E.g. Onions, C.T. (ed.) (1966) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

²⁵¹ Heidegger, M., Sallis, J. (trans.) (1998) ‘On the Essence of Truth’ in Heidegger, M., McNeill, W. (ed.) *Pathmarks*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 136-155 (p.144).

²⁵² Heidegger, M., Sadler, T. (trans.) (2002) *The Essence of Truth: On Plato’s Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*, New York, Continuum, p.7.

On attunement, Heidegger considers that “Being attuned, i.e., ek-sistent exposedness to beings as a whole, can be “experienced” and “felt” only because the “human being who experiences”, without being aware of the essence of the attunement, is always engaged in being attuned in a way that discloses beings as a whole.”²⁵³ This is easily applied to an understanding of landscape in which attunement and experience embellish and disclose a fuller sense of consciousness. In interacting and developing communicative networks with land in the everyday sense, for example in writing and articulating the landscape relationship, the “human being who experiences” discloses a landscape relationship. This relationship is inclusive of human and land through a unity of being and becoming in abstract and action. This idea of developing attunement in speaking for instance is related to Heaney’s idea of the preverbal illustrated earlier.²⁵⁴ The ongoing processes of thought and language through the contingency of time and experience see being expressive of *a* landscape as invisible absolute reality, while becoming is expressive of *the* landscape as visibly apparent, befitting a phenomenological understanding of reality.

Sometimes however this is not an immediate or easy endeavour as the social, cultural, political and economic realities dispensed by the collective can overpower the individual and dispossess them of an ability to create realities. The sense of alienation this engenders provokes resistance and action to recover a sense of landscape where it is lost. In this sense realities of landscape are renewed and transformed to overcome distance between human and land. Auden considers this in his *Bucolics*: Am I / To see in the Lake District then, / Another bourgeois invention like the piano?²⁵⁵ Realities are resisted, contested, developed or simply accepted. In any case, landscape realities are discovered in tensions between individual and community as well as between subject and object and nature and culture. Landscape is a relationship in the sense that it works to reconcile such tensions in its ultimate expression of realities in a phenomenological sense.

²⁵³Heidegger, M., Sallis, J. (trans.) (1998) op cit., p.147.

²⁵⁴ p.89-90.

²⁵⁵ Auden, W. H. (1976) ‘Bucolics III: Mountains’ in Auden, W.H., Mendelson, E. (ed.) (1976) *Collected Poems*, London, Faber & Faber.

An idea of being is evident through the consistency of a landscape purpose. This understanding of truth and unconcealment as specific instances and dimensions of something understood more generally develops an integration of both universal and specific in a singular concept. In some ways similar to this, Hubbard talks of the collapsibility of the real and imagined. Here referring to a human-centred approach we can develop this notion into an idea of landscape in which universal and specific and real and imagined integrate into a generality of landscape abstract and activity.

Humanistic theories about subjectivity, meaning and experience subtly shift the focus from space to place. Such ideas reject a mimetic reading of text, where novels simply mirror the physical and social truths of a landscape, to posit a much more intricate notion of the written text, where the real and imagined collapse in a description that *refracts* the true human significance of particular places.²⁵⁶

Where we can contend that text and landscape are more than mirrored realities we can take this to the extent that they are embodied realities whose rendering illustrates not the true human significance of particular places but rather the true significance of a landscape performance that refracts through the particularity of the landscape instance that is place. An articulated voice of landscape maintains and cultivates the process of landscape making by providing a tangible product from which the process may recommence. Landscape as a product is transformative and its visibility is renewable

3.5 Maintaining and cultivating landscape in routine

Maintaining a full connection in landscape we are integrated as humans within its process and products. This is an idea that can be explored in a poem of Robert Frost: 'Mending Wall'.²⁵⁷ Here we can consider ideas of movement and stasis in landscapes of the everyday where the communicative networks of landscape and its meanings are engaged and developed in a relationship that offsets static tradition and moving process.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Hubbard, P. (2002) 'Geographies of Text' in Hubbard, P. et al. (eds.) *Thinking Geographically*, New York, Continuum, pp. 124-146, (p.128).

²⁵⁷ Frost, R. (1986) 'Mending Wall' in *Collected Poems of Robert Frost*, New York, Buccaneer Books, p.47.

²⁵⁸ See Gardiner, M. E. (2000) *Critiques of Everyday Life*, London and New York, Routledge. Regarding the Lefebvrian aspect of this: "Lefebvre stresses that the everyday represents the site where we enter into a

In this poem, the speaker and his neighbour meet each spring to repair a wall that separates their properties. The title itself gives away the routine of the act. In mending wall, it is like any other general routine chore like feeding hens or milking cows. It is “just another kind of outdoor game”. The absence of an article in the title serves to remind us that this is a common chore and a typical routine in circumstances of rurality.²⁵⁹ This chore is part of a sense of being in the game of routine. Each year, they come together to repair the wall. The circumstances in which they repair the wall are apt to change as thought and language formulate a manifestation of a collective self in the processes of chores and routines.

Not being part of the process results in the wall left and not mended. The result is falling boulders and wide gaps both literally and figuratively as human and land are separated by inactivity. “No one has seen them made or heard them made, / But at spring mending-time we find them there...” Things are going on which they are not a part of. They find land having carried out its own processes and in interaction, land influences human response, setting a tone for a developing landscape. By mending the wall land and human are taken beyond themselves into landscape. In the circumstances of lifting the stones “we wear our fingers rough with handling them”. In the process questions can be asked of an age old routine. Communication through activity enables potential for change in a new way of embodying this routine and changing the circumstances of a landscape’s creation. The speaker is questioning the wall. “There where it is we do not need the wall: / He is all pine and I am apple orchard. / My apple trees will never get across / And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him. / He only says, ‘Good fences make good neighbors.’”

This revelation makes a lot of sense to the speaker, why build a wall if there is nothing there to wall in or out? Is this activity just a waste of time? To reach such potentially revelatory questions one must perform in a landscape relationship. The old

dialectical relationship with the external natural and social worlds in the most immediate and profound sense, and it is here where essential human desires, powers and potentialities are initially formulated, developed and realized concretely. It is through our mundane interactions with the material world that both subject and object are fully constituted and humanized through the medium of conscious human praxis.” p.75-76.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Nash, W. (1998) *Language and Creative Illusion*, New York, Addison Wesley Longman Inc. p.48.

clichéd adage uttered by the neighbour, “Good fences make good neighbours”, suggests a firm and static stance that makes the activity of repairing the wall a war of attrition against a moving, changing land. In this respect movement and rootedness are features in the action of landscape as well as its abstract. This commonality connects both realms together in a most direct sense. The tension represented by the set response to continuing change is generative of activity. At the interface of fixity and flux, the speaker asks ‘why?’

“Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows?
But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.” I could say “Elves” to him...²⁶⁰

Prompting the activity of mending wall the speaker seems to think they are fighting some force of nature in building the wall. This is evident at the start of the poem. The unquestioning routine of the men in mending wall meets resistant force in flux. “Something there is that doesn't love a wall, / That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it / And spills the upper boulder in the sun, / And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.” In spite of all this the tradition remains unchanged. Though contested briefly by the speaker, the act of mending wall continues. In future though with the circumstance and memory of this experience, one will always ask why must we do this and perhaps at some point in the routine of the game the question of why will be resolved in a different way of doing things or a different way of understanding as a new landscape is revealed in the process of the chore. In turn, this different way of doing things or looking at things will itself produce a question seeking revelation.

It is only through the influence of a wider collective of people and things, that we can formulate opinions and ask questions of landscape and the practices we follow in it. Interestingly, despite his gentle complaining the speaker is the one to initiate the practice of mending wall. Before he starts he does not question why, it is only through

²⁶⁰ Frost, R. (1986) ‘Mending Wall’ in *Collected Poems of Robert Frost*, New York, Buccaneer Books, p.47; appendix p. 277.

being a part of a communicative process that he develops landscape in questioning. Landscapes must be experienced and lived, to be engaged with to distil different ways of doing. Landscapes require human lived experience to exist and become. Sociability often defines how we landscape and perhaps this is why the speaker continues with mending wall; he recognizes landscape as a social art in which tensions are continually generating attempts at compromise to make self in landscape.

We can see through this poem that it is through the enactment of the ritual, through acting upon the discourse of ages past and present that things remain the same and the neighbour “will not go behind his father's saying, / And he likes having thought of it so well / He says again, ‘Good fences make good neighbors.’”²⁶¹ The minutiae of the year on year performance of the routine subtly illustrate its difference and perhaps an understanding of landscape as a concept. Neither neighbour nor speaker will pick up exactly the same stones in exactly the same way at exactly the same time again. The chore will be carried out in the different moods of human and land. The speaker or the neighbour may be frustrated or angry at the hassle of the chore; they may be happy and contented in its monotony. The day may be windy or still, the sky cloudy or clear. The tiniest details make difference in the sameness of routine. It is these details that develop into larger questions and stir enquiry and inquisition of how we express self in landscape.

Expressing a sense of this development of self in landscape Gaston Bachelard, writing in his *Poetics of Space*, claims that the relationship between place and personality is so intimate and tightly bound that understanding self-identity through place, in the sense of *topoanalysis*, rather than through psychoanalysis, may be more beneficial in understanding the human condition.²⁶² Bachelard describes the affective connections that can be formulated in the dialogic process, illustrated in poetics through Frost's poem, *Mending Wall* discussed above. One might consider this as involvement in a preparation of space and a resolution of place through the activity of landscape.

²⁶¹ *ibid.*

²⁶² See Buttimer, A. (1980) ‘Home, Reach and the Sense of Place’ in Buttimer, A. & Seamon, D. (eds.) *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, London, Croom Helm, pp. 166-187, (p.167).

At the level of the poetic image, the duality of subject and object is iridescent, shimmering, unceasingly active in its inversions. It has been created by another but we begin to have the impression that we could have created it. It becomes a new being in our language, expressing us by making us what it expresses.²⁶³

Landscape embodies a sense of permanence or a sense of illusory being in a becoming that expresses itself in the speaker with the land making the human what it expresses and the human making the land what it expresses. This symbiosis is enacted back and forth between human and land and subsumed into the collective being of landscape. The unceasing activity of a dialogic process through landscape's facilitation of human and land illustrates that activity is expressed in thought and language spoken or rendered in work of chores like mending wall. In the very ordinariness or mundanity of the task, there is a type of universality, a characteristic of the chore shared widely. The poem is no longer just a particular wall, a specific 'somewhere' or 'something'. Sharing in the experience by reading it the wall becomes representative, something opened up to be related to. There is a knowledge transfer taking place and the poem is taken out of itself to become a more universal 'everywhere' and 'everything'. This is generated by the potentially infinite ways in which the poem may be read. This potential is enabled by linguistic ambiguity. Words kindle a flame in imagination. In its communication we can take *a* knowing of landscape articulated by a writer and make it *our* knowing and thence turn a circle from an 'everywhere' to a 'somewhere'. In the revelatory potential of landscape the circle keeps turning.

As we move into the next section the challenge is to stabilize meaning in terminology on the one hand while allowing its illumination to manifest in different ways on the other. As discussed by Muir the kernel of the problem with landscape studies is in its terminology that "has had the effect of rendering a subject which has long attracted and fascinated a broad spectrum of enthusiasts inaccessible and irrelevant."²⁶⁴ Equipped

²⁶³ Bachelard, G. (1958) Jolas, M. (trans.) (1964) *The Poetics of Space*, Boston, Beacon Press, p. xv. See Cresswell, T. (2004) *Place: A Short Introduction*, Malden MA, Blackwell, pp.24ff.

²⁶⁴ See Muir, R. (1999) 'Symbolic Landscapes' in Muir, R. *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan, pp.212-244, p.217 for an excellent discussion of how landscape has evolved from a historical, evolutionary approach to a symbolic approach that seeks to identify meanings and messages in landscape. The elusive and shifting nature of symbolism however, seems to have taken a casualty in the form of landscape as an accessible and relevant area of scholarly enthusiasm.

with the criteria of its difficulty we must develop a logical structure which facilitates sameness and difference in such a way as to avoid falling into the oblivion of a broad spectrum and also to avoid excessive containment so that such difference might be expressed.

It is about articulating a mode of understanding that recognises landscape as built upon and created from tensions and paradoxes that should be incorporated rather than worked around in any development of a landscape idea. In order to be able to conceive of how landscape might be expressed as process and product we must be capable of understanding a kind of universality within which we can contextualise the particularities of its being and doing as a durable concept but also reconciling a sense of the elusive and shifting in the differences of its use and application.²⁶⁵ Dealing with or understanding the source of this difference, it may be read through the lexical ambiguity in readings of the term ‘utopia’. Having come from Greek into English, ‘utopia’ has two distinct meanings running through it rendered particularly in the subtleties of pronunciation. There is utopia in the sense of a good place that exists and utopia in the sense of a ‘no place’, hinting at this perfect, unattainable ideal.²⁶⁶ Thus, a good place can never be absolutely perfect. Part of the idea of landscape cultivated in this thesis is accepting and thriving upon an element of irreconcilability and the essential use of distance as creative. Creative of itself in terms of process and product, there is a recursive understanding to be had in landscape. Incorporating these observations within a functional framework is the challenge facing the next chapter.

²⁶⁵ Cf. King, R. (1996) ‘Critical Reflections on Biocentric Environmental Ethics: Is it an alternative to anthropocentrism?’ in Light, A., & Smith, J.M., *Space, Place and Environmental Ethics*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, pp.209-231 “In order to judge how we should act in the environment, we must be capable of understanding and articulating the particularities of our relationships with specific environments.”p.225.

²⁶⁶ E.g. Onions, C.T. (ed.) (1966) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.966. Utopia as ‘good place’: *εὖ* (“good” or “well”) and *τόπος* (“place”); as ‘no place’: *οὐ* (“not”) and *τόπος* (“place”) A similar idea of ambiguity may be seen in the maxim *Et in Arcadia Ego* where as Schama notes, it may be taken to mean “and I was in Arcadia” in the sense of a golden age idyll or it can also be taken to mean “and I too (Death) was in Arcadia” meaning a more continuous present lament for its passing. Schama, S. (1995) *op cit.*, p.519. Schama notes how this was put to great effect in Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*.

Chapter Four: Reconciling Performance and Product in a General Representative Structure

We shall not cease from exploration
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time.
-T.S. Eliot - 'Little Gidding'²⁶⁷

Thus from a mixture of all kinds began/ That het'rogeneous thing...
-Daniel Defoe, 'The True Born Englishman'

4.1 Introduction

In light of the previous chapters in this first part, it is necessary to co-ordinate their findings into a coherent and functional theoretical idea that may be performed and enacted in the context of everyday experience. Landscape as medium or relationship may be observed in its embodiment of both an idea of the abstract and an idea of the performative. Landscape may be understood both as stable concept, perhaps most commonly understood in the sense of landscape as representation or as object and as a living, changing, entity that is in tension with that stability. It is in such paradoxes and tensions that the particular relationship of landscape is created.

Beyond the human and performance and activity of the human, we might consider ways in which land performs activity. In approaching this it might be considered an endeavour carried out within a hermeneutic circle in that we can only know landscape through reference to its individual parts and one can only know its individual parts by reference to landscape as a whole.²⁶⁸ This circular understanding illustrates that land and human are connected and in that connection we can learn more about them. What we learn of them in such a context is landscape. Landscape may be considered a self-contained entity rather than a disparate collection of 'landscapes' in for instance, distinct or separate 'cultural landscape' or 'natural landscape' embodiments. There is a process of landscape with different outcomes that appear as 'cultural' or 'natural' for

²⁶⁷ Eliot, T.S. (1963) 'Little Gidding' in *T.S.Eliot: Collected Poems, 1909-1962*, New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., p.200.

²⁶⁸ E.g. Heidegger, M., Van Buren, J. (trans.) (1999) *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of factity*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press. Klemm, E.D. & Schweiker, W. (eds.) (1993) *Meanings in Text and Actions: Questioning Paul Ricoeur*, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia.

example. Landscape is processed and produced through interactive elements of subject and object, and nature and culture, for example. Thus, in the engagement of these elements, landscape is developed in communication and the linkages established form a symbiosis of parts that constitute a whole beyond themselves in landscape reality. There is the capability of both representation and performance in landscape. Instead of asking whether landscape is representation or performance, the question is rather how they may be reconciled into a singular concept.

Coming to terms with this and considering a dynamic of circularity as a process, landscape turns to product and back to process again. Related to this is an idea of unconcealment or discovery in landscape. The process illuminates an explanatory reality that informs a new beginning in process. The circularity of landscape is thus revelatory. This continuing potential for revelation is illustrated by its circularity and due mainly to the variable circumstances and contingencies of time and experience. As well as this is the idea of landscape as something that is creative and productive in the context of tensions between its parts; tensions that are created by the friction between categories such as subject and object, individual and community, private and public and, nature and culture. This tension or friction is enabled by the inclusion of these categories in a landscape relationship. A landscape product is produced by such categories coming to terms with each other in creative tension.

These dynamics reconcile and include categorical distinctions rather than separate and exclude them from each other. Inclusion and reconciliation make them something beyond themselves. Irreconcilable categorical dichotomies are rendered redundant by linking communication. Thus, tensions and momentum generated by the integration of human and land through communication in turn are generative of a landscape product. The reality of a product imbues a sense of renewal and transformation in an understanding of landscape. Tensions are productive and transformative through the circumstances of their interrelationship. The action of landscape makes them productive rather than destructive; for if tension and paradox were destructive landscape would cease to exist.

Understanding what the relationship of human and land entails abstractly informs a sense of how it might work in its particularities. Thus let us consider in what way land may behave in relation to human and vice-versa. Considering this, let us be aware that distance and proximity are useful points of illustration in a developing landscape process. There is a space between human and land. With developing interaction, that space is filled, finding its expression in some visible product that integrates human and land. This product is a culmination of the interactive process. There is an idea of a developing progression from distance to proximity and a turn back to distance again, given that appearances are apt to change with passing time and experience. This is a sensory experience in that it is a visible reality that is developed through the facility of communication. Communication is the fundamental basis of interaction and expression of what we see, hear, smell and touch. Without spatial distance between human and land this sensory awareness, realised in proximity, would not be possible. Such ideas are generally relevant to any extrapolation of how human and land might integrate.

An initial manifestation of this sensory connection involves what might be called objective appraisal since this conveys a sense of distance between human and land as an initial connection is established. To encapsulate this idea we might consider a sense of observation.²⁶⁹ At this point the human is observant of something in land, so to encapsulate a sense of beginning or of the initial nascence of connection with land, we might refer to a comparable and compatible sense of nature. At this stage of initial reckoning, landscape cannot exist since there is a lack of integration because of a lack of communication. In this stage of beginning, if we can identify observation as an initial state for the human, then the human as subject is observant of some object. This object may be considered nature for example, nature chosen as an example because of its

²⁶⁹ A number of words and concepts were considered to illustrate the bigger picture in the dynamics of landscape making. 'Perception' was given close consideration but the comparative specificity and clarity of 'observation' was preferred. Following Toretto (1986): '...instead of trying to cope with perception in all its rich variety, the philosopher of science will do well to concentrate on the one form of it that is directly relevant to his subject, namely, the attentive, deliberate, explicitly cognitive mode of perception that goes under the name of *observation*.' p.1 See Toretto, R. (1986) 'Observation' in *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 37(1), 1-23. 'Observation' and its relation to theory neutrality in the sense that what is observed by, in this case scientists, 'is not determined solely or even largely by the theories that they endorse. See Fordor, J. (1984) 'Observation Reconsidered' in *Philosophy of Science*, 51 (1), 23-43. For recognition of this problem and the intellectual fatality of terminological miscommunication see Keller, C. (1994) 'The Theoretical Aspects of Landscape Study' in Collins, T. (ed.) *Decoding the Landscape*, Galway, Centre for Landscape Studies, pp. 79-99.

implied sense of birth or beginning. Identifying these states of observation and nature as conceptual states, we might consider how these states will be enacted in reality. It is here that a distinction emerges. If five people are observing nature, all five people will not observe it in exactly the same way. The lived experience of each individual determines that there will be difference in the manifestation of both observation and nature. This idea of a conceptual kernel that is common to all five hypothetical people highlights a degree of sameness but because of that sameness it also allows us to account for difference and the unexpected in how observation or nature may be manifest.²⁷⁰ Thus it enables a developing balance between theory and practice. It is an indication of tension and knitting and unravelling boundaries in the course of a developing landscape process.²⁷¹

Developing this sensory based relationship, let us consider how an increasing sense of proximity might manifest beyond a distinct appraisal of an object by a subject. The relationship evolves in an integrated sense to the extent that human and land are a developing collective so that the human is among surroundings or enveloped within a larger context. The sense of duality implied by observation of nature is developed into a sense of interrelationship as understanding grows and awareness develops. To illustrate this idea let us consider a sense of interpretation that confers a developed sense of understanding amongst surroundings. A cognate sense in land may be considered in environment, implying a developing sense of integration from an initial sense of separation. The manifestation of increasing proximity is that duality is eroded and illustrated in terms of interpretation and environment.

Beyond interpretation, an expression of its findings emerge through an articulated product, a particular shape is put on the environment. Put another way, human and land explain the criteria of their particular relationship at a particular time. Conveying the level of integration we might then talk of landscape or perhaps *the* landscape. This is the sensory embodiment of land that is articulated through language and activity. With developed senses of observation and interpretation and of nature and environment,

²⁷⁰ Cf. Fordor, J. (1984) op cit.

²⁷¹ Cf. Cosgrove, D. (1985) 'Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea' in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 10(1), 45-62.

choices are articulated in a product of landscape. Landscape is a choice made through a developing process of proximity.

This chapter is designed to render in an abstract sense what landscape is in the sum of its parts, each part defined by the collective. With the benefit of this understanding an explanation can develop of how landscape might be embodied in the turning circles of renewal and transformation. Following the diagram, its terms shall be explored in greater detail and the reasoning of its parts extrapolated through etymological investigation. This is designed to render a sense of specificity in abstraction since a significant problem in landscape studies is that commentators frequently use like terminology to express different meanings.²⁷² It is important to clarify what is meant abstractly when considering ideas of nature, environment and landscape.²⁷³

The method of this abstract approach is developed in order that it might allow a sense of relative motion in a blend of movement and substance, capturing the multiplicity and variety of different meanings by allowing them to flow through a simple structural cycle. This is different to a poststructuralist approach which assumes that 'the kind of method needed to get at these conceptions will need to be very supple, able to capture the multiplicity of different meanings without reducing them to the simplicity of a simple structure.'²⁷⁴ The kind of method needed to get at a blend of movement and rootedness requires some semblance of structure through which movement may be considered. Without structural integrity the constant movement of landscape would allow it to evaporate conceptually beyond any appraisal. With the benefit of a structure that is simple in the sense that it embodies potential vagueness and ambiguity and thus allows space for potentially infinite meaning, understanding and explanation, landscape may be developed as an abstract and practice by means of which

²⁷² On the importance of clarification in terminology see Keller, C. (1994) 'The Theoretical Aspects of Landscape Study' pp. 79-99.

²⁷³ On the slippery and elusive nature of 'landscape' as a term see Stilgoe, J. (1982) *Common Landscapes of America, 1580-1845*, New Haven, Yale University Press, pp.3-21. This study is emblematic of the primarily American humanist tradition that 'sought to reformulate landscape as a concept whose subjective and artistic resonances are to be actively embraced', Cosgrove, D. (1985) 'Prospect, perspective and the evolution of the Landscape Idea', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 10(1) p.45.

²⁷⁴ Peet, R. & Thrift, N. (1989) 'Political Economy and Human Geography' in Peet, R. & Thrift, N. (eds.) *New Models in Geography: The Political Economy Perspective*, London, Routledge, pp.3-30; p.23.

we can develop a sense of what landscape is and also how it may potentially be manifest.

Hypothetically, two humans side by side share a common identity as human. The way each human lives one's life however may be entirely different from the other. The experiences of each lived life express a difference that goes into the values, insights and understanding of surroundings. This difference is all the more identifiable or comparable, because of the commonality two individuals share by being human. Paradoxically, the two humans are both the same and different. There is the abstract idea or template of the human as there is the action of each human. Landscape, defined by human activity, shares such tension.²⁷⁵ The schematic categories here are designed to provide originative, directive forces in landscape consciousness. They enable abstraction and a distinguishable configurative understanding that is applicable to the individual irrespective of historical, economic, cultural or political paradigms since these things are confluent with all humans in different ways. These categories conjoin in a very simple structure that belies a necessarily very supple method, arrived at in a manner rather like that of a case of Occam's razor or a law of succinctness.²⁷⁶ It is a method of disaggregation of ideas of nature, environment and landscape using difference enabled through linguistic history and etymology that renders difference ultimately apprehensible through sameness.²⁷⁷ Sameness will serve as a prospect from which difference may be appreciated.

²⁷⁵ Cf. Pringle, T.R. (1991) 'The polar landscape in English and American popular culture 1845-1990' *Landscape Research*, 16, 43-8, 'At the simplest level landscape denotes simply a subjective 'way of seeing'. It is however also a social product, the result of the collective transformation of nature. From this dichotomy landscape is invested with a dialectical tension. It is effectively a historically specific process, one in which social groups experience, reflect upon and structure the world around them.' p.43. Quoted in Muir, R. (1999) *Approaches To Landscape*, London, Macmillan, p.220.

²⁷⁶ Put plainly, Occam's razor is a postulation that it is better to seek out a simple and ordered interpretation rather than a complex and disordered one. See for example Walsh, D. (1979) 'Occam's razor: A Principle of Intellectual Elegance', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 16(3), pp. 241-244. Barnes, E.C. (2000) 'Ockham's Razor and the Anti-Superfluity Principle', *Erkenntnis*, vol. 53(3), 353-374. Schulte, O. (1999) 'Means-Ends Epistemology', *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, vol. 50, 1-31.

²⁷⁷ Cf. Nash, C. (2000) 'Environmental History, Philosophy and Difference', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26(1), 23-27.

4.2 Old Words, New Orders

One of the key ideas developing in this part is the idea of sameness and difference and exploring a way to illustrating how they might interact. One way touched upon has been the notion of the word itself in that there is the word and the essential same fabric of its letters and there is the ways in which the word may be made apparent through its performance and production. The impetus for revising the use of terms in developing a sense of landscape is perhaps best explored through a postmodernist derived idea in a crisis of representation in which terms are believed to have lost a valuable sense of meaning. Curry notes Olsson's discussion of a past where there was a 'book of nature' in which scientific knowledge was secured and fixed to a rigid set of criteria. For Curry this meant that "Our knowledge was seen to be an attempt to grasp or capture that reality, and language was the medium through which that capturing occurred."²⁷⁸ Curry goes on to suggest that the crisis of representation has occurred because it is no longer believed that signs or language more generally have the appropriate ability to reflect that reality.²⁷⁹ By this reckoning words have lost their authority in representing secure knowledge though at one time it was believed to be there. This is due in the main to multiplicity and the volatile ambiguity of language. Curry cites the example of Lyotard and his claim of many intersecting threads and different language games following different rules to illustrate an apparent inability of language to reflect secure reality.

Perhaps it may be more accurate to say that it is reality itself that is not secure and that in the manner of how landscape is produced, an apparent kind of reality is extrapolated from a universal. Multiplicity is linked by an element of commonality so that language may reconcile a sense of constitution with interpretations of that constitution. In other words the constitution of language does not change but its realities do change. In this way any word is not a universal of kind but rather a kind of

²⁷⁸ Curry, M. (1991) 'Postmodernism, Language and the Strains Of Modernism', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 81(2), 210-228, p.215. See Olsson G. (1989) 'Braids of justification' in Benko, G.B. (ed.) *Space and Social Theory: Towards a Post-Modern Human Geography*, Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press. Cf. Also Philo, C. (1994) 'Escaping Flatland: a book review essay inspired by Gunnar Olsson's *Lines of Power/Limits of Language*', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 12(2) 229 – 252.

²⁷⁹ See Lyotard, J. F. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition*, Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, p.40ff.

universal. The commonality of multiple and disparate usages of a word is in the singular collective constitution of the word.

According to Curry moving from a focus on the philosophy of science to an interest in language in geography appeals to different sets of beliefs. These beliefs for an enquiry into language are twofold. Firstly, it is believed that “inquiry into language is necessary because some combination of modern communication, advertising, and corporate culture has rendered the meanings of words much more slippery than they once were.”²⁸⁰ Secondly, it is believed “that language at one time was more meaningful than it now is.”²⁸¹ On this second belief Curry presumes that it is difficult to produce evidence that language has changed.²⁸² In the sense of practice and usage of language in creating realities that are themselves not secure, it is possible to produce evidence that language has changed. In the sense of abstraction and the constitution of the word invisible from everyday reality, it is not possible to show change. Like the self-contained circularity of landscape, paradoxically things change but do not change. Change in language and word will not be found in looking for something new, since there is nothing new in the word.²⁸³ Instead, to find change it is necessary to look into the word to things that have not yet been learnt or things that were once learnt but are forgotten. Kinds of universality and facets of the word make themselves apparent through the circumstances of experience.

A way of illustrating this sense of sameness and difference is to explore the elements and facets of words that make up a collective term and, from which term in turn kinds of realities may be extrapolated. Thus a brief consideration of etymology shall give an indication of a tension for instance, in both what landscape is and also how it may look different, essentially blending ideas of movement and substance and being and becoming in a collective status. By virtue of this investigation progression is developing beyond mainly theoretical observations of this chapter to interpretive engagement with literary sources as exemplars in landscape abstract and action. Completing the cycle of

²⁸⁰ Curry (1991) op cit., p.215.

²⁸¹ *ibid.*

²⁸² *ibid.*

²⁸³ Cf. for example the role of old languages in crafting new nationalism. Anderson, B. (2006) ‘Old Languages, New Models’ in *Imagined Communities*, London, Verso, pp. 67-83.

progress then, there is movement beyond an interpretive understanding to a sense of explanation of landscape in the articulation of a collective self. Continuing for the present with an observational approach let us consider how and why terms and ideas of 'Nature', 'Environment' and 'Landscape' fit into an abstract, substantial, universality through which we can see the movement or 'doing' of its particular ways. Chapters two and three have been building towards this approach, considering how landscape as a concept might be realised in terms of performance or product. By way of exploring the words with an understanding that this landscape concept is text, analysis of the words can offer a way of reconciling performance and product into a coherent relationship. Exploring the etymology of the word reveals a structural definition, a product or form as it were. The process is the manner, the potential ways that definition takes shape in apparent reality.

4.2.1 Nature

One can begin on a journey towards shaping land as observation gives birth to new knowledge, ways of understanding and ways of explaining understanding.²⁸⁴ Conceiving of nature²⁸⁵ it may be considered something elemental, related to birth and a sense origin. It is something that manifests as a foundation to spur creative growth in developing novelty and process. Nature is by and large an elusive and paradoxical term in the sense that we are perceived as being part of nature and yet, nature is our construction.²⁸⁶ As Soper writes, Nature is a term "at once both very familiar and extremely elusive".²⁸⁷ An idea developing from this is a sense of paradox and tension.

²⁸⁴ Cf. Wylie, J. (2007) 'Introducing Phenomenology: From Disembodied Gaze to Lived Body' in Wylie, J. *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.144-147.

²⁸⁵ Cf. Merleau-Ponty, M. (2003) *Nature: Course Notes From the College De France*, Illinois, Northwestern University Press, 'Nature is the primordial- that is the nonconstructed, the noninstituted; hence the idea of an eternity of nature (the eternal return) of a solidity. Nature is an enigmatic object, an object that is not an object at all; it is not really set out in front of us. It is our soil [sol]- not what is in front of us, facing us, but rather, that which carries us.' p.4. While it is agreed here that nature is enigmatic and something that carries us. It is, by virtue of it being a thing named or encultured that it is perhaps more constructed and instituted than not.

²⁸⁶ For an illustration of its elusiveness see Lovejoy, A. O. & Boas, G. (1935) *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, Baltimore, John Hopkins Press, pp. 447-56 where thirty-nine senses of the Greek term *phusis* or 'nature' in literary and philosophical usage are cited, from which other ethical, political and religious usages are derived.

²⁸⁷ For an overview of nature and its polymorphous and multiplicitous meanings see Soper, K. (1995) *What is Nature?* Oxford, Blackwell. See also Castree, N. (2005) 'Two Natures? The dis/unity of Geography' in Castree, N. *Nature*, London, Routledge, pp.177-223. This chapter is particularly

There is a sense of disparate elements threading together in a singular collective. This illustrates that tension and paradox are implicit in all the parts of a landscape consciousness. There is universality within the concept that allows logical interaction between its elements.

This sense of pervasive commonality is engendered by a fundamental tension between human and land. The paradoxes in understanding nature as a concept are developed through ways in which human and land make themselves known to each other. Foundations for connectivity and making known are set in the observation of nature. The idea of a nature-society relationship is often considered in absolute and dichotomous terms. This is conveyed in ideas on “anthropocentric” or “ecocentric” relationships. Arguments persist over how Nature should be engaged objectively. Is it to be dominated? Is it to be submitted to? Is it to be engaged with on mutually beneficial terms?²⁸⁸ Common to all these questions is a sense of wonder in how might human and land interact.²⁸⁹ In what way can they make themselves known to each other? The diversity of potential and consideration of right or wrong ways of engaging with ‘Nature’ illustrate a sense of distance between a subject that does not quite understand an object but imbued with a progressing sense of understanding that involves human and land as collective.²⁹⁰ It is this collective and the interface of its

informative on the topic of contrasting and contested meanings radiating from the single term. See also Dickens, P. (1996) *Reconstructing Nature*, London, Routledge or Haraway, D. & Harvey, D. (1995) ‘Nature, Politics and Possibilities’, *Society and Space*, 13, 507-27.

²⁸⁸ See Passmore, J. (1974) *Man’s Responsibility for Nature*, London, Duckworth; also Wagner, P. (1960) *The Human Use of the Earth*, New York: Free Press or Lauwerys, J.A. (1969) *Man’s Impact on Nature*, London, Aldous Books. See also Castree, N. (2003) ‘Geographies of Nature in the Making’ in Anderson, K., Domosh, M., Pile, S. & Thrift, N., *The Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London: SAGE Publications, pp.168-183. The root of this problem of culture and nature is grounded in binaries as argued by Castree (2003). It “is the analytical cast of so much post-Enlightenment thinking about culture and nature. With Descartes and Kant as its philosophical flagbearers, the analytical mindset works with self-sufficient abstractions and seeks out binarisms. Thus the exclusive categories of culture and nature line up with a host of other suspect dualisms: human/non-human, mind/world...” p.168. Perhaps a means of developing landscape is to consider such dualisms as inclusive rather than exclusive and part of a collective that creates landscape rather than separate and disparate entities closed off from each other.

²⁸⁹ For an example of the influences of culture on nature and vice-versa see Wilson, A. (1991) *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez*, Toronto, Between the Lines.

²⁹⁰ As Macnaughten and Urry (1998) write in their opening line to *Contested Natures*: “there is no singular ‘nature’ as such, only a diversity of contested natures; and that each nature is constituted through a variety of socio-cultural processes from which such natures cannot be plausibly separated.” Macnaughten P. & Urry, J. (1998) *Contested Natures*, London, Sage Publications, p.1. See also McNeill, J.R. (2000) ‘Ideas and Politics’ in McNeill, J.R. *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth Century World*, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, pp.326-357.

elements that is the cornerstone of geographical enquiry.²⁹¹ The naming of 'Nature' and 'Culture' illustrate their linkage.²⁹²

A first look at nature as a Latin and Indo-European English derivative brings us to the Latin term *natura*.²⁹³ The term *natura* may be divided into its root and suffix. That is *na/t* and *tura*. As an illustration of movement, let us consider the *tura* suffix first. The suffix *-tura* bears a close resemblance to the Latin future active participle *turus – a – um*. As Miller argues²⁹⁴, the future active participle *futurus – a – um* is older than the substantivised neuter *futurum* or the plural *futura* so the nominal suffix *tura* could not have spawned the future participle *futura*. Thus by this distinction Miller goes on to consider the stem formation of *pariturus* 'about to give birth' with *partura* 'the process of giving birth'. Thus there is a distinction between 'about to' and '(continuous) process'. In a similar vein, we can consider *staturus* 'about to stand' with *statura* 'the process of standing' from which the leap to the English term 'stature' may be made. The suffix *ture* is thus rendered as the process of doing something. The function of this nominal suffix is largely action derived from an iterative or duration value. This is illustrative of an idea of proposition or attempting at something by a continual process. As a suffix it renders its allied *Na* root actionable. By virtue of the suffix let us consider *na-ture* a process of 'na/t –ing.

Developing this let us consider the root *na/t*. This root is verbally derived from the Latin verb *nasci* 'be born; proceed from, rise; grow'.²⁹⁵ The link is more obvious when one considers the verbal adjective *natus –a-um*, 'born'. Compounded by the suffix *ture*, 'Nature' can thus be translated as a process of growing with the implication that it is about to begin. If we consider the Latin *natura* as a translation of the Greek *phusis*, this definition is further supported. Further consideration of *phusis* finds it cognate with the

²⁹¹ See Whatmore, S. (2003) 'Section 3: Culture/natures' in Anderson, K., Domosh, M., Pile, S. & Thrift, N. (eds.) *The Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, SAGE Publications, pp.165-207. Whatmore speaks about geography staking its disciplinary identity on being uniquely concerned with the interface between human culture and natural environment, p.165. As we shall come to see the relationship interface conceivably exceeds 'natural environment' to a broader sense of consciousness in landscape.

²⁹² Cf. Pablé, A. (2010) 'Language, knowledge and reality: The integrationist on name variation', *Language & Communication*, 30(2), 109-122.

²⁹³ Morwood, J. (ed.) (2005) *Pocket Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

²⁹⁴ See Miller, D. G. (2006) *Latin suffixal derivatives in English and their Indo-European ancestry*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 118-122.

²⁹⁵ Morwood, J. (ed.) (2005) *Pocket Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

verb *phuo* translated in the active sense as to produce, beget, bring forth, in the active as ‘make to grow’ and in the passive as ‘grow’, spring up, come into being or existence, be born or introduced.²⁹⁶ In this way Nature is the beginning of process, the birth of a process and a sense of ongoing creation.

The way in which ‘Nature’ participates in the idea of landscape as reasoned in this thesis is developed through its etymological history. Its essential meaning, as with a placename, governs its existence by virtue of human and cultural engagement.²⁹⁷ The human in an act of observation begins a process of experience in the embryonic materiality of surroundings. A process of growth is initiated, dependent upon initial human observation.²⁹⁸ As Actor-Network-Theory would argue, ‘Nature’ does not develop without human participation, nor for that matter does human culture develop without ‘Nature’. Each is developed by the other. Natures are the first nascent steps in a sense of environment. Abstractly, the relationship is fulfilled irrespective of its material and physical or its social and cultural circumstances but in visible activity it is defined in its differences by such circumstances. The connectivity is fresh in observation as knowing and understanding begins to develop. Expressing this developing understanding in the form of a collective let us consider the idea of ‘Environment’.

²⁹⁶ Liddell, H. G. & Scott, R. (9th ed.) (1996) *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

²⁹⁷ On a similar note to do with wilderness: see Schama, S. (1996) *Landscape & Memory*, London, Fontana Press, p.6ff. ‘The wilderness, after all, does not locate itself, does not name itself.’ p.7 On the production of nature as countryside see Macnaughten, P. & Urry, J. (1998) ‘Nature as Countryside’ in *Contested Natures*, London, Sage Publications, pp. 172-200.

²⁹⁸ See Whorf, B., Carroll, J.B. (ed.) (1956) *Language, Thought and Reality*, Cambridge, Mass., M.I.T. Press. Consider Gestalt psychology in reference to visually observable situations. “...the basal fact of visual perception is the relation of figure and ground, that perceptions are largely in the nature of outlines, contrasted more or less with the grounds, fields and fillings of outlines, and that perception of motion or action is figural in type, or connected with the perception of at least a vague outline quality.” p. 163. As well as this, the word accounts for the scientific nuance of linguistic logic. Cf. Nichols, R. (2007) *Thomas Reid’s Theory of Perception*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.17. Cf. also Garman, M. (1990) *Psycholinguistics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: “The ‘same’ letter or word, may be easily perceived against a range of physical differences that may derive from the sort of writing implement used, the type of letter form aimed at (a printed vs. a handwritten form), individual styles of handwriting, imperfections of execution (leaving a smudge or broken line) and so on. In our perception of such forms, gaps are closed, and irregularities are overlooked: indeed such constancy or invariance, of visual perception was a prime motivation behind the development of the concepts of *figure vs. ground* in the school of Gestalt psychology.” pp.8-9. Perception characterises the first tentative links that make *being-in-the-world*. Our difference is based less on an absolute idea of *being in the world* as on an idea of blending senses of being and becoming. One of the paradoxes identified here is that landscape is not permanent or absolute and so there is need to reconcile a sense of the impermanence developed by multiple and changing realities. Cf. Buttmer (1993) p.139.

4.2.2 Environment

Powell opens his chapter on the 'Origins of Modern Environmentalism'²⁹⁹ discussing the modern anxieties over the various aspects and implications of environmental deterioration. He claims that at first glance these have rather shallow roots and that we may be too easily persuaded to seek the origins of environmental concerns in dwindling non-renewable resources, over-population, energy crises and other concerns which define our sense of the environment. Environment is often spoken of in the same breath as 'impacts' and holds the general idea that environment is fundamentally an ecological term.³⁰⁰

This aspect of the relationship, in essence the idea of effecting change upon the physical 'environment', illustrated by such turns of phrase as 'environmentally sensitive', tend to define what we commonly mean by environment.³⁰¹ It is something inanimate and exclusive of humanity. Humanity is often perceived as totalitarian external force acting on environment. Nash points out that "despite its fascinatingly detailed ecological narratives, environmental history has tended to work with a largely undifferentiated notion of the 'human'."³⁰² This idea obscures a sense of 'Environment' as inclusive and something which humanity is organically constituent in, rather than robotically dominant over or distinct from as a sort of 'economic man'.³⁰³ Developed in

²⁹⁹ Powell, J. M. (1996) 'Origins of Modern Environmentalism' in Douglas, I., Huggett, R. & Robinson, M. (eds.) *Companion Encyclopaedia of Geography*, London, Routledge, pp. 274-293.

³⁰⁰ On the manner in which the term 'environment' is used in different ways and contexts, see for example Sarre, P. & Reddish, A. (1996) *Environment and Society*, London, Hodder & Stoughton. Barton (2001) considers the origins of this scientific, ecological sense of environment to have its origins in British imperialism and the about turn from policies of exploitation to those of conservation. See Barton, G. (2001) 'Empire Forestry and the origins of Environmentalism', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 27(4), 529-552.

³⁰¹ Cf. Barnard, A. & Spencer, J. (eds.) (1996) *Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, London, Taylor and Francis, pp. 185-186: "...even when social aspects of our surroundings are alluded to with the term 'environment', they tend to be understood in ecological metaphors borrowed from the biophysical environment." p. 186.

³⁰² Nash, C. (2000) 'Environmental History, Philosophy and Difference', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26(1), 23-27, p.24.

³⁰³ Cf. for example Ley, D. (1996) 'Geography without Human Agency: A Humanistic Critique' in Agnew, J., Livingstone, D. N. & Rogers, A., *Human Geography: An Essential Anthology*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.192-211, p. 197. This idea of difference is represented, as Nash (2000) notes, in "key areas of analysis and critique within feminism and feminist geography where the cultural meanings of the human, nature and the natural have been so thoroughly interrogated." Nash, C. (2000) 'Environmental History, Philosophy and Difference', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26(1), 23-27, p.23.

this sense, ‘Environment’ represents an organic step from the subtle detachment of an ‘observation-nature’ relationship.

This etymological approach to a sense of environment underlines that there is nothing ‘new’ in words but that there are things that have yet to be learnt or retrieved from memory. Through etymological consideration a basic sense of unity or ‘withinness’ is revealed implicit in the word. It is important to note that ideas of ‘Nature’ and ‘Environment’ are not discrete from one another but rather, develop into one another through porous movement as may also be understood with senses of observation and understanding. There is no fixed point at which one turns into the other.

Observation, a sense of initial noticing, looking over or attending to, maybe inspecting³⁰⁴ that which is outside, suits the term ‘nature’ and the spirit of beginning and ongoing that it embodies. Observation embodies this spirit also in the sense of first sight and leads to a level of interpretive understanding, just as Nature leads to the ‘withinness’ of environment and the increased proximity of human and land.³⁰⁵ As a broad example, where ‘Nature’ may seem “out there”, ‘Environment’ is more akin to “within there”.³⁰⁶

As with the previous analysis of ‘Nature’, let us analyse the term ‘Environment’ in order to access a sense of its universality from which kinds of it may be extrapolated. To approach the term let us consider it to be of three constituent parts: *en-viron-ment*. As with the *tura* suffix in nature, the *ment* suffix has a similar function in relation to environment. Derived from the Latin suffix *mentum*, meaning a state of or quality of,

³⁰⁴ Observation derives etymologically from the Latin *observare* – ‘watch, observe; attend to; respect; pay court to’ see Morwood, J. (ed.) (2005) *Pocket Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford, Oxford University Press. Breaking it down further the prefix *ob* – ‘over’ and the verb *servare* – to guard, attend to, to watch. The word comes via the French *observer* which carries like meaning. See Onions, C.T. (ed.) (1966) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

³⁰⁵ See Simmons, I. G. (1997) *Humanity & Environment: A Cultural Ecology*, Essex, Longman, p.234. Simmons makes the connection that there is a sense of the “outside” to meanings of nature. Tying this concept with the environment fails however to distinguish between the words in an appropriate manner.

³⁰⁶ See Ingold, T. (2000) *The Perception of the Environment*, London, Routledge: “Just as there can be no organism without an environment, so also there can be no environment without an organism. Thus my environment is the world as it exists and takes on meaning in relation to me and in that sense it came into existence and undergoes development with me and around me.”p.20.

ment is plainly enough an English derivative. To take as an example the English word ‘document’ this word can be broken down into the Latin verb *doceo* and the suffix *mentum*. *Doceo* means ‘to teach’ and with *mentum*, a state of, the two terms come together to form *documentum*, ‘a state of teaching’. Hence, we have the English word document: a state of teaching from which we learn. Teaching is being done by the document. The ‘being done’ sense is activated by the *ment* suffix. There are many instances of such words in conceal*ment*; improv*ement* and so on. The *ment* suffix gives an essential sense of acting and action, of a continuous doing, of enactment and the state of being acted. With it this carries the sense of advancement, that is, the potential result of an action or perhaps of something achieved through improv*ement*. When we talk throughout this work of ‘unconcealment’, we talk of an act of unconcealing.

With *ment* then, we are in a state of being environed. The *en* prefix, derived from the Greek prefix, means ‘in’ or ‘within’. This is easily related to the English derivative ‘in’. The *viron* element derives from an old French form of the verb *vire* – to turn, *viron* meaning circuit or circle. This then equates with the modern French verb *environner* ‘to beset, surround, encircle’.³⁰⁷ Thus we can conclude that environ means in essence encircled or surrounded. Adding the *ment* suffix to the word we can push it further to denote a state of being surrounded.

Concomitant with this sense of environment is the developing idea of proximity and so developing from observation into a sense of interpretive understanding. The sense of the word ‘in a state of being surrounded’ illustrates the idea of being amongst something and within it. Interpretation illustrates this sense of status.

Interpretation holds a comparable sense of being within or among something with that held by environment.³⁰⁸ Developing proximity in the flux of time and experience contributes to a change in terminology that reflects a change in spirit. This change continues as proximity develops beyond interpretation to articulation and the sense of

³⁰⁷ Onions, C.T. (ed.) (1966) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.318.

³⁰⁸ From Latin *inter-pretari* ‘to translate, understand, explain’. Understanding and explanation require articulation. While the *inter* prefix is straightforward, meaning within, among or between, the *pretari* element is more problematic. There is a possibility that it is related to the Sanskrit preposition *prati* – ‘towards, against, with regard to’, but this is merely a speculative consideration. See Coulson, M. (1976) *Sanskrit: A Complete Course for Beginners*, Kent, Hodder & Stoughton, p.94.

expressing a particular understanding. The idea of environment is representative of the human individual experience crafted through sociability and refracted through uniqueness in a developing sense of understanding.

Developing this sense of progressive understanding, interpretation is an insufficient rendition of human action in landscaping as environment is an insufficiently conclusive detail of a human–land relationship. Speaking of interpretation, Wittgenstein claims that “any interpretation still hangs in the air along with what it interprets, and cannot give it any support. Interpretations by themselves do not determine meaning.”³⁰⁹ Neither does understanding determine meaning. It is the conveyance of understanding or its development into explanation that brings about a conclusive sense of reality and meaning. Explanation and more specifically, articulation, embodies choice and the particular facets of understanding that reveal realities. Taking the process of consciousness further, one extracts meaning from the manner in which landscape manifests itself in a full coherence of human and land. Landscapes are supported and continued in the expression of articulated language and the physical articulation of living and working developed beyond a state of environmental constitution. Landscape realities are continually changing in the way choices in explanation are made in a collective of human and land to reveal the particularity of an understanding both to ourselves in our own minds and outwardly to others

4.2.3 Landscape

Exploring this progression, let us consider landscape.³¹⁰ Here, let us employ the same etymologically derived approach to developing how landscape participates in a process of which it is its own product.³¹¹ Muir writes of the approaches to landscape: “As with the branches on a tree, some of these approaches are close and share connections, while others are further apart.”³¹² This diversity in landscape that is wholly a part of its

³⁰⁹ Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (198a).

³¹⁰ For a general analysis of the landscape concept that considers tensions implicit in its making, see Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, esp. ‘Introduction’ pp.1-16.

³¹¹ On the problematic nature of defining ‘landscape’ see Jackson, J.B. (1984) *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press.

³¹² Muir, R. (1999) *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan, p. xiv. Richard Muir offers an important discussion of the often varied and sometimes related approaches to landscape which render it varied and

application has seeped into the entire sense of the word so that there is no reflection on any sense of commonality. In order to elucidate some sense of commonality or universality that collects a series of diverse practices, it is necessary to explore in what way the approaches of landscape are the same rather than solely concentrating on what ways they are different. In this regard then 'Landscape' like the other words considered so far, is developed so that it might be a blend of sameness and difference in a singular collective. This approach understands landscape as defined by and definitive of production through creative tensions.

Cresswell in his chapter 'Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice' calls into question the validity of landscape as a concept.³¹³ As it is overly fixated on origins, it should perhaps be retired and cast on the heap of clichéd anachronisms. He argues that landscape "does not have much space for temporality, for movement and flux and mundane practice."³¹⁴ This is a pressing conceptual reality if landscape is considered as a fixed object. It appears that landscape in order to function effectively as a concept must be considered between two extremes of movement and fixity since consideration leaning towards one extreme in particular renders landscape quite redundant. It is necessary to uncover an abstract sense of practice as well as a performative sense.

Illustrating landscape as specifically product without a sense of process and thereby implying the need for a blend of movement and fixation, Cresswell continues that landscape as it "is too much about the already accomplished and not enough about the processes of everyday life"³¹⁵ Situating landscape in a larger picture, as an organic result of unities formed and lived, develops a sense of symbiosis in a manifest product of tensions and paradoxes that make landscape not an object but a relationship. In this way landscape is less an object than it is a status of collective elements. Landscape

often disparate in its meanings. From Sauer's (1925) 'Morphology of Landscape', there are many different strands of cultural or humanized landscapes, landscape is considered as a common and ordinary part of everyday life as with for example, Meinig (1979) and Stilgoe (1982); rural landscapes Cloke *et al.* (1991); urban landscapes Knox (1993) and Jackson (1972); Landscape as symbolic, representational and represented, Cosgrove (1984), Cosgrove & Daniels (1988) and Duncan & Ley (1993); landscapes as gendered, class based and politicised, Dorrian & Rose (2003), Mitchell (1994) and Zukin (1991).

³¹³ Cresswell, T. (2003) 'Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice' in Anderson, K., Domosh, M., Pile, S. & Thrift, N. (eds.) *The Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, SAGE Publications, pp. 269-289.

³¹⁴ *ibid.* p.269.

³¹⁵ *ibid.*

embodies flux and movement in a way that sees it as something constantly becoming but also something that can remain rooted as abstract. Aware of the shortcomings of a landscape concept built on either rootedness or movement exclusively, any revision must reconcile landscape as a blend of sameness and difference. In the relativity of each to the other, a sense of stability may be found in a sense of movement and vice-versa.

With the continuity of time and the experience of the human, natures, environments and landscapes are constantly re-evaluated and reconsidered in new lights. The re-doing, the reconfiguring, the remaking of landscapes is the result of human involvement that is vital to the existence of landscape. Landscape, rather than being fixated on origins may be considered derivative of origins in a sense of environment, which itself is derivative of a sense of nature. Common to landscape, environment and nature in a cyclical dynamic is a sense of what Said might call an active beginning.³¹⁶ Though nature is, in a linear sense considered as origin and landscape its conclusion, both environment and landscape occupy a sense of beginning in their revelatory potential. Each stage in its own right embodies beginning and conclusion so that the commonality of its elements are rendered in the whole as productive and manifest reality. As with 'Nature' and 'Observation', 'Environment' and 'Interpretation', let us consider the term 'Landscape' and the 'articulation' that explains and shapes both human and land as a collective.

Consider that 'landscape' has two main constituents in 'land' and 'scape'. Let us examine the 'land' fragment first. The modern English meaning of 'land' refers to 'a solid portion of the earth's surface; ground, soil; country, territory'³¹⁷. This is derived from a similar Old English meaning of 'land' or 'lond'.³¹⁸ Etymological evidence and Gothic use indicate the original sense was in a definite part of the earth's surface owned by an individual or, more generally, the home of a nation or state in the sense of a country. The meaning of the word was then extended to 'solid surface of the earth', which had been the sense of the root of Modern English 'earth'. The original sense

³¹⁶ Said, E. (1985) *Beginnings*, New York, Columbia University Press, p.6.

³¹⁷ Onions, C.T. (ed.) (1966) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 513.

³¹⁸ Cf. also Welsh 'Llan', 'enclosure, church' and the Breton 'lande' Weekley, E. (1921) *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, London, John Murray, p.819.

of *land* in English is now akin to ‘country’³¹⁹. This is evident in the names of countries e.g. *Ireland*, *England* etc. So it is we can define land as a delineated area of the earth’s surface, a definitive part of the earth’s surface over which ownership is held. In its definition land is a discrete area with a tangible sense of existence.

Expanding the idea of land as a discrete material area, the suffix ‘scape’ imbues a sense of human involvement. Combined, landscape is a relationship of human and land that blends the substance of land with the movement of shaping. A relationship is extrapolated through articulated explanation in the shape of language, performance and activity. Etymologically related through old English channels to ‘shape’ and ‘ship’, the ‘scape’ of landscape develops potentiality in malleability. Landscape is a status in the sense we know it as a relationship of human and land but the potential of its malleability means we do not know with certainty what shape it will take. This duality has largely been lost from current landscape understanding. Spirn briefly addresses the etymology of landscape and, in so doing, illustrates how the word ‘landscape’ is deprived of its original meaning. The relationship between ‘scape’, ‘shape’ and ‘ship’ implies unified association and a deliberate and purposeful movement to form something. Moreover this idea of shaping integrates a sense of movement and active process with the passive sense of a material area of land.³²⁰ The view of landscape as passive object renders it indistinguishable from land and thus quite pointless. Landscape as a blend of active and passive in status develops its validity and distinction as a necessary means of exploring how human and land interact.

Landscape is another step in the cyclical dynamic of the relationship between the material world and those who dwell within there. While Spirn’s concept of landscape for example on its own is cognate with the concept of landscape developing here, the focus on landscape exclusively does not consider the potential role environment and nature has to play in the production and articulation of landscape as activity and

³¹⁹ Onions, C.T. (ed.) (1966) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 513.

³²⁰ Spirn, A. (1998) *The Language of Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press, pp.16-17. See also Olwig, K. R. (2008) ‘The Actual Landscape or Actual Landscapes’ in Elkins, J. & DeLue, R. (eds.) *Landscape Theory*, London, Routledge, pp.158-177, (p.163). See also Schama, S. (1996) *Landscape & Memory*, London, Fontana Press, p.10. ‘At the very least it seems right to acknowledge that it is our shaping perception that makes the difference between raw matter and landscape. The word itself tells us as much.’

expression. In finding the essential and fundamental meaning of words it may be understood how people are enveloped in a unified relationship with their material worlds. Rather than focussing on landscape in a vacuum, the attempt here is to craft a background and context to landscape that considers from what landscape evolves and grows and to where it goes in its dynamic quality.³²¹ Landscape is more than either human or land. It is formed and continues to be formed by activity and the contingencies of circumstance through an abstract sense of universality. Its sense of status is rendered through circumstances that are extrapolated in the communication of realities.

The individual develops a sense of uniqueness in experience and the particularities of social, cultural, economic and political circumstances. Drawn from community into the individual, they are processed and returned to community by the individual. The individual learns and contributes to learning the language of circumstance. Learning is a continuous process without conclusion. Ways of seeing, ways of understanding and ways of explaining are natural to us until we learn something new and revelatory.³²² Landscape stands for relationship not just of individual and land but also extending to the plurality of community. Reduced to the tensions between the elements of the relationship, since human cannot be land nor can individual be community, revelation as product of collective elements drawn together but not absolutely unified, creates renewal and transformation. The status of landscape illustrates and embodies creative expression and the renewal and transformation manifest in its apparent realities through a reflexive circularity.³²³

The idea of change within a reflexive cycle can be conceived of as an hourglass-type structure through the idea of distance and proximity. The wide top represents distance while the narrow middle represents proximity. Interacting with the processes of change

³²¹ Spirn, A.W. (1998) *The Language of Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press.

³²² Cf. Cosgrove (2003) "We learn to see through the communicative agency of words and pictures, and such ways of seeing become 'natural' to us." p.250.

³²³ Cf. Cresswell (2003) illustrating this distinction of gaze and embodiment through the example of J.B. Jackson. "J.B. Jackson's mobile view of landscape began to show how vision is a practice. J.B. Jackson's way of looking is so much less reliant on that distanced gaze from above and so much more practised – more embodied." Cresswell, T. (2003) 'Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice' in Anderson, K. et al. (eds.) *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, Sage, pp.269-289 (p.275).

and the ongoing experience of life, the articulated product illustrated by the narrow neck, undergoes renewal and transformation. Distance, both back in time and across space is creative. The landscape product comes from somewhere and goes somewhere. Changing the landscape product, as is inevitable through the contingencies of time and circumstantial experience, opens up the process again to distil through to another end product of landscape. The consistency of the cycle is in a renewable beginning and end. The action is rhythmic in that there is a structural form and there is the manner of that structure's appearance. The continuing process is one moving inward to proximity and back out again, opening up a distance that enables a new creativity. This action is continually retaining a sense of the connection between human and land. Illustration in a collective sense conveys how distance and proximity become more than themselves in a process of landscape. One way of approaching this is through the idea of intimacy.

4.2.4 Intimacy

Cloke and Jones describing the idea of dwelling, refer to the significance of intimacy in making up landscape and place. "Dwelling is about the rich intimate ongoing togetherness of beings and things which make up landscapes and places, and which bind together nature and culture over time."³²⁴ Thus considering for all distance and proximity, intimacy as a standard feature of landscape, then its variability may be considered in terms of degrees. For example at the stage of observation and nature there is not the same degree of intimacy as there would be at the stage of articulation and landscape. As intimacy increases and as landscape is refined in the togetherness of human and land at all stages, land and human, to paraphrase Merleau-Ponty, think themselves in each other.³²⁵ In the process of this collective integration, intimacy is inextricably a part.

The need of landscape as a whole to produce is derivative of the need of its elements to relate in some way through the inevitability of their connection. When we sense landscapes we sense articulations of living that are continually renewing and

³²⁴ Cloke, P. & Jones, O. (2001) 'Dwelling, Place and Landscape: An Orchard in Somerset', *Environment and Planning A*, 33, 649-666, (p.651).

³²⁵ Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962) 'Sense Experience' in *Phenomenology of Perception*, London, Routledge, pp.240-282, p.249.

transforming.³²⁶ Living is manifestation of this connection. To articulate the sense of organic continuity in such a connection it may be considered symbiosis. For landscape to have relevance it must embody both continuity and change. Human and land are integrated in living as its processes and realities are illustrated in the movement and substance of landscape. Human and land depend on each other for living. With this realisation of interdependency we know that intimacy is never removed from the relationship of landscape. As Wallace Stevens puts it “The greatest poverty is not to live/ In a physical world.”³²⁷ As with landscape in an entirety, intimacy is something that may be understood through a distinction of what it is and how it is enacted. We can know what intimacy is in the process and product of landscape but we cannot know how it will appear in particular instances of making land and human known to each other.

Etymologically, ‘intimacy’ derives from the Latin verb *intimare*, ‘to make known, announce’ and the noun *intimus*, ‘inmost’ Understanding how the inmost aspect of connectivity is made known in particular realities is realized through intimacy. It is about communication between elements in relationship. The fact of their continuing communication in the landscape process is testament to the pervasive significance of intimate connection. This communicating, this making known, defines the steps in this process, bringing with it as it does progressive and continuously becoming stages of unconcealment.

Cultivating an understanding of landscape as a relationship and status, means consideration of it both as abstract and activity. The route to understanding the status is through its means and its means reside in communication. It may be noted thus that an etymological approach such as has been outlined in this chapter moves through the same circles of observation, interpretation and articulation. Each element within a landscape defines and is defined by the sum of its parts. Much as with a text, each letter

³²⁶ See for example Mitchell, G.F. & Ryan, M. (1997) *Reading the Irish Landscape*, Dublin, Town House. Note that this is the third revision of this seminal work. “This book is a complete revision of what was originally *The Irish Landscape* and more recently *The Shell Guide to Reading Landscape*’ p.2. The text is a manifest indication of the capacity of landscape for continual renewal and transformation in its realities.

³²⁷ Stevens, W. (1954) ‘Esthetique du Mal’, in Stevens, W., *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* New York, Alfred A. Knopf, p. 325.

and word defines the collective as the collective sense defines our understanding and explanation of the words.

The role of intimacy in the means of communication is such that it is an intimacy of communication rather than a communication of intimacy between human and land.³²⁸ In the outward dissemination of landscape realities among communities, the individual relationship is one among many. It is in the many tensions and the intimacy of their communication, the 'right' words or the 'right' expression for the moment at hand, that human and land combine to produce and reproduce landscape. Renewal and transformation come about through the changes wrought in lived experience.³²⁹

The cyclical dynamic of this hourglass-like concept maybe in the sense of the sands of time flowing through the glass, can be considered to work in a similar fashion to the cycle of seasons, spring, summer etc. A related example of change may be in differently articulated landscapes on wet days and sunny days. Involvement in such circumstances renews a sense of landscape by the realities created. Logically, the perfect abstract remains outside the circle. The visible reality is an attempt at the abstract and so, it is always renewable.

The core idea in the evolution of this relationship of landscape is synthesis and communication between elements. Let us consider this idea of synthesis further using the example of nature and culture. If we understand human expression as culture and land expression as nature, it will become apparent, if it has not already, that these categories are not clean-cut. Instead, they have a complex inter-relationship. In essence, they are defined by their relationship to each other.

4.3 The raw and the cooked

The title of this chapter subsection is borrowed from the title of a work by Claude Levi-Strauss, who emphasised the importance of structuring oppositions in myth

³²⁸ This latter idea of intimacy may be more related to ideas like habitation and Bourdieu's *habitus*. E.g. Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

³²⁹ Merleau-Ponty, M. (1964) 'Eye and Mind' in *The Primacy of Perception and other essays on Phenomenological Psychology*, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, pp.159-193, "Visible and mobile, my body is a thing amongst things, it is caught in the fabric of the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing." p.163.

systems or binary oppositions in language. These structured oppositions produce key boundaries or differences within cultures often defining terms as being the opposite of other terms. Consideration of this concept for landscape is based on the same lines of definition by opposition. For instance, by rootedness movement may be known and vice-versa. Features, such as the raw and the cooked, that are traditionally viewed in opposition, are considered here for ways in which they can be connected and to embody a structural unity. This is the case with subject and object or human and land. They are traditionally viewed in opposition or separated but there are dialogues, networks and links that connect and unify. The concept of the raw and the cooked helps to illustrate this.

In *The Raw and the Cooked*, Levi-Strauss set out to demonstrate how empirical categories like the raw and the cooked or the fresh and decayed can be used as conceptual tools. As conceptual tools, one can then elaborate abstract ideas and combine them in the form of propositions.³³⁰ This is significant as landscape may be understood as a continually developing blend of empirical categories that combine to produce landscape. The continuously changing nature of realities mean that these combinations are always attempts at some abstract idea of what landscape is. Landscape realities are determined by how landscape is manifest rather than what it is so that time, experience and circumstance continually reveal new ways of doing landscape that preclude any visible absolute sense of landscape determinism.

Each manifestation of reality and continually developing realities is a proposition. Involved in this proposition subject and object, nature and culture and human and land are made into something more than their individual categories. In this respect subject

³³⁰ Levi-Strauss, C. (1970) *The Raw and the Cooked*, London, Harper & Row, p. 1. See also Herrington, S. (2004) 'Cultivating A Canadian Cuisine' in Horwitz, J. & Singley, P. (eds.) *Eating Architecture*, Boston, MIT Press, pp.33-51. Levi-Strauss' ideas in this respect are an expansion of Edmund Burke's ideas on the sublime and the beautiful. See Burke, E. (1757; 1958) *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul. In this, coarseness is presented as the epitome of sublimity, while smoothness is considered the pinnacle of beauty. "Burke's insights foreshadow debate on the preservation of a mixture of roughness and smoothness in landscape aesthetics (arguments that conflate politics with garden design)" Herrington (2004) p.39 On Edmund Burke, see Gibbons, L. (2003) *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics and the Colonial Sublime*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Cf. Jackson, P. (1989) *Maps of Meaning*, London, Routledge, pp. 155-170. Cf. Wilson, A. (1991) *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez*, Toronto, Between the lines.

and object, for example, cannot be treated individually. Developing this idea Levi-Strauss writes of mythological analysis.

There is no real end to mythological analysis, no hidden unity to be grasped once the breaking-down process has been completed. Themes can be split up *ad infinitum*. Just when you think you have disentangled and separated them, you realize that they are knitting together again in response to the generation of unexpected affinities. Consequently the unity of the myth is never more than tendential and projective and cannot reflect a state or a particular moment of the myth.³³¹

With landscape there is no end and this is precisely because there is no hidden absolute unity in the sense of how landscape is done. Landscape is a relationship and thus a status. In this status there are ideas of proximity and distance but not unity in the sense that human can actually be land or land can actually be human or, that nature can actually be culture and vice-versa. The extent of unity in landscape is tempered by communication. This is in the sense that things are connected by the addition of a mediating communicative element. The process from nature to landscape through a distillation from an embryonic idea to an explanatory reality is never completed or ended. The revelation of landscape, produced by tensions that reject absolute unity, turns back into another embryonic idea in nature as elements are placed and displaced in circumstance and comparative experience.

The realities of landscape then are propositions of a kind of universal. Its products manifest moments that the tendential unities of the process cannot. The idea of realities or propositions as attempts at some absolute imbues a sense of multiplicity. This multiplicity is generated on an intra subjective level in the sense that one person generates many realities over time and, on an intersubjective level in the sense that many people generate many realities. Levi-Strauss considers this idea of multiplicity. Continuing with mythological analysis, he considers that:

this multiplicity is an essential characteristic, since it is connected with the dual nature of mythological thought, which coincides with its object by forming a homologous image of it but never succeeds in blending with it, since thought and object operate on different levels.³³²

³³¹ Levi-Strauss, C. (1970) *The Raw and the Cooked*, London, Harper & Row, p.5.

³³² *ibid.* p.6.

Thus let us consider that landscape reality as a product of human and land may be a proposition towards what landscape is in abstract if we consider the abstract as absolute. There is an irreconcilable distinction between what landscape is and how it is performed and acted. In this respect it is a kind of universal rather than a universal of kind. The ambiguities in landscape mean that it can encompass movement and stillness but since these operate on different levels they cannot be independently unified. Were this the case, it would be impossible for landscape to manifest visibly. In landscape the opportunity is given for relativity in the sense that movement is tangible because of stillness as stillness is tangible because of movement. Landscape thus is a homologous image of movement and stillness and in this idea of blended relativity rather than absolute unity, landscape finds a measure of success as abstract and action.

In anthropological terms the concept of ‘the raw’ versus ‘the cooked’ is often associated with the dichotomy between the natural world and the world of human culture.³³³ Lévi-Strauss proposes a structural and thematic link between the opposition of the raw and the cooked in mythological thought and society’s attempt to establish a balanced relationship between natural and cultural forces. Nature and culture are considered not so much as separated opposites but rather as transformative and interdependent. Nature and culture are defined by each other.

Culture and nature or human and land relate in the development of communication, sociability and language. Lévi-Strauss wrote that “The raw/cooked axis is characteristic of culture; the fresh/decayed one of nature, since cooking brings about the cultural transformation of the raw, just as putrefaction is its natural transformation.”³³⁴ There is not a dividing line between nature and culture but rather an interdependent transformative relationship formed by connection. What is raw is defined by what is cooked and vice-versa and whether something becomes raw or cooked depends on the

³³³ Cf. Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.9-11.

³³⁴ Lévi-Strauss, C. (1970) *The Raw and the Cooked*, London, Harper & Row, p.142. On a further note in Lévi-Strauss’ thought on South American Ge and Tupi myths: “The Ge and Tupi-Guarani myths...are more concerned with the despoiling of animals, which is an aspect of nature. But the dividing line between nature and culture is different, according to whether we are considering the Ge or the Tupi myths: in the former it separates the cooked from the raw; in the latter it separates the raw from the rotten. For the Ge then, the raw + rotten relation is a natural category, whereas for the Tupi the raw + cooked relation is a cultural category.” p. 143.

particularity of the interaction between culture and nature. There is a metamorphosis from what is raw into what is cooked just as there is a metamorphosis from nature into environment and in turn into landscape, with particular expression (landscape reality) embodying an entity that is the conjunction of human and land. Unified interaction and intra-action with community self and environment bring about metamorphosis and cycles of renewal through processes of unifying and re-unifying.

Nature cannot become culture and nor can culture become nature, thus the 'raw/cooked axis' is distinguished by elements falling along the 'raw' side of the axis of 'natural' origin and along the 'cooked' side of 'cultural' origin. Symbolically, cooking marks the transition from nature to culture. The natural transition of the natural is to putrefaction and death in the way an apple may be left to rot on the ground. In this way nature and culture do not relate so that they are separated and as a result undiscoverable to each other. Nature and culture discoverable to each other is the lifeblood of landscape. In mythological thought, the cooking of food in effect enacts a form of unifying mediation between nature and society. The cook can be viewed as a cultural agent whose function is to "mediatize the conjunction of the raw product and the human consumer, and whose operation thus has the effect of making sure that a natural creature is at one and the same time *cooked* and *socialized*."³³⁵

Developing a sense of landscape from this concept, communication is a unifying mediary since nature and culture in and of themselves cannot compose a unity. Extending Levi- Strauss' concept, sociability is necessary for culture and nature to interact. Conversely, the lack of sociability implies raw material, without names. The very act of naming 'Nature' begins a process of communication that is illustrated by cooking and culture. Nature, the raw material, when observed, is cooked through processes of interpretation and articulation into something that blends culture and nature. Landscape, the act of shaping land, is thus a social art in every conceivable sense from the individual and land to community and land and individual and community. Nature as 'raw material' is 'cooked' through sociability, through interaction and intra-action as culture performs cooking because of nature's influence. Culture and Nature

³³⁵ *ibid.* p.336.

combine to shape landscape. Landscaping, by virtue of categories like subject and object and their connection through communication ensures landscape as a relationship status inculcates a process of *transformation* rather than *separation* in a product of manifest reality. Landscaping, in the different appearances of its enactment and performance, transforms nature and culture through communication and unconcealment. Its renewal revolves with the nascent productivity of nature and the realisation of that productivity by culture.

We can see that the relationship that culminates in landscape is far more complicated and detailed than the simple nature/culture binary or that of the raw and the cooked. Rather than standing in opposition they grow and develop into one another and outward of one another in rhythmic movements of distance and proximity. The bits and pieces of nature and culture are drawn together in communication to produce a temporary but coherent whole in landscape. With sedimentation of new thought and language, memory and appearance and the intimate communication of the whole, landscape is manifest in momentary propositional realities. These realities are disentangled to be knitted together again through the particularities of circumstance and the variable contingencies of time and experience. Senses of place or placelessness are formed to characterise the broader dynamic of landscape consciousness and the continual human condition of ‘coming-to-terms-with’. It is in the practice of nature and culture coming to terms with one another in the context of a landscape relationship that a visible product is created. It is perhaps an expression of the status of landscape reality in that nature and culture are indistinguishable in its manifestation. As Schama writes:

For although we are accustomed to separate nature and human perception into two realms, they are, in fact, indivisible. Before it can ever be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock.³³⁶

Nature, culture, subject, object, individual, community public and private all combine in elemental relationships to produce tensions that form landscape realities. In the developing process and ultimate product of landscape a relationship is affected in a whole that is continually attempting and proposing unity in its collective. In the stability

³³⁶ Schama, S. (1996) *Landscape & Memory*, London, Fontana Press, p.6-7.

of a collective there is continual movement in the attempted but never quite complete resolution of what landscape is and how it is performed and acted. It is in the ambiguity of words and language that there is always scope for renewal. Landscape is manifestation of that renewal. Renewal is generated in self- reflexivity that turns from elements defining the whole as the whole defines its elements.

4.4 Public and Private: synthesis through communication

What might be considered public and private geographies see their lines blurred but not deconstructed by communication. The private, or the intra-subjective, and the public, or the inter-subjective, are entirely interdependent while at the same time retaining their own distinctions. Individuals make up the community and the culture of the community is refracted through individuals. Neither however, though they are interdependent, ever becomes the other. Landscape is expressive of the reciprocity between its constituent elements.

Let us illustrate this with an example from Schama's interpretations on Dutch culture pertaining to paintings.³³⁷ Schama considers how in artistic Dutch domestic scenes the intimacy of private life is separated from the public sphere by the symbolic door. A dependable social order, however, sees the two related closely by varying degrees of reciprocal interaction. Through the doorway boundaries are crossed between worlds, admitting experience and allowing for the flow of public to personal and personal to public, transforming rather than separating each.

Insiders and outsiders, then, are united within the picture frame but divided by the domestic threshold. And the degree of that separation varies from picture to picture...In all these paintings...that distinction between home and world, between safety within and unknowns without, is sharply emphasized by the prominence of the door frame. But in all of them too, the outside, represented in views of handsome streets or landmarks of the civic world such as churches, is not in the least threatening³³⁸

³³⁷ Schama, S. (1987) *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, London, Fontana Press. See also Dubbini, R. & Cochrane, L.G. (trans.) (2002) *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, pp.16-20.

³³⁸ *ibid* p. 570ff.

This example illustrates for us the idea of reciprocity in private and public spheres and the varied inter-pollination of each with the other. The end product of articulation informs a particular type of observation which itself culminates in another particular kind of articulation. In essence, the idea is one of reflexivity and the constant processes of inter and intra-action. Let us consider Maurice Merleau-Ponty's concept of institution as a means of illustration.

What we understand by the concept of institution are those events in experience which endow it [experience] with durable dimensions, in relation to which a whole series of other experiences will acquire meaning, will form an intelligible series or a history- or again those events which sediment in me a meaning, not just as survivals or residues, but as the invitation to a sequel, the necessity of a future.³³⁹

In the constancy and reflexivity of living, experience is given its durable dimensions. These dimensions are passed on to the creation and performance of landscape realities through the contingencies of time and experience. Experience like landscape is manifest in different ways though abstractly the same thing is happening. Developing an overall sense of landscape the institution may be considered the community and thus a network which provides tangible dimensions in an abstract sense.

The tensions generated in the myriad ways of performing communication between individual and community, public and private, past and present, traditional and modern are enabled by the survivals and residues of living. They create and recreate pasts, presents and futures in the collective status of landscape. Lassus' idea of 'Games of Displacement' usefully illustrates the idea of comparative exchange between memory and laterally between individuals. It is based on classification in the sense that elements in the visual field may be considered more or less natural or artificial. For instance, the potted plant on top of a refrigerator may be considered natural or artificial. The introduction of a new element may have the effect of displacing the plant through comparison. The old plant may be considered more or less natural than the new element.³⁴⁰ The placement and displacement of elements form and renew landscape

³³⁹ Merleau-Ponty, M. (1988) 'Institution in Personal and Public History,' in Merleau-Ponty, M. *In Praise of Philosophy and Other Essays*, Illinois, Northwestern University Press pp. 107-114, (p. 108).

³⁴⁰ Lassus, B. (1975) 'Games of Displacement' in Lassus, B., Bann, S. (trans.) (1998) *The Landscape Approach*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, p.26.

realities through experience, circumstance and communication over time. The presentation of different ways of looking are taken in by the individual, considered and articulated in a landscape reality that places elements in moving collective focus. It is through the idea of exchange and sharing manifest in the communicative relationship of landscape that tensions such as public and private intersect and unify to develop a landscape dynamic.

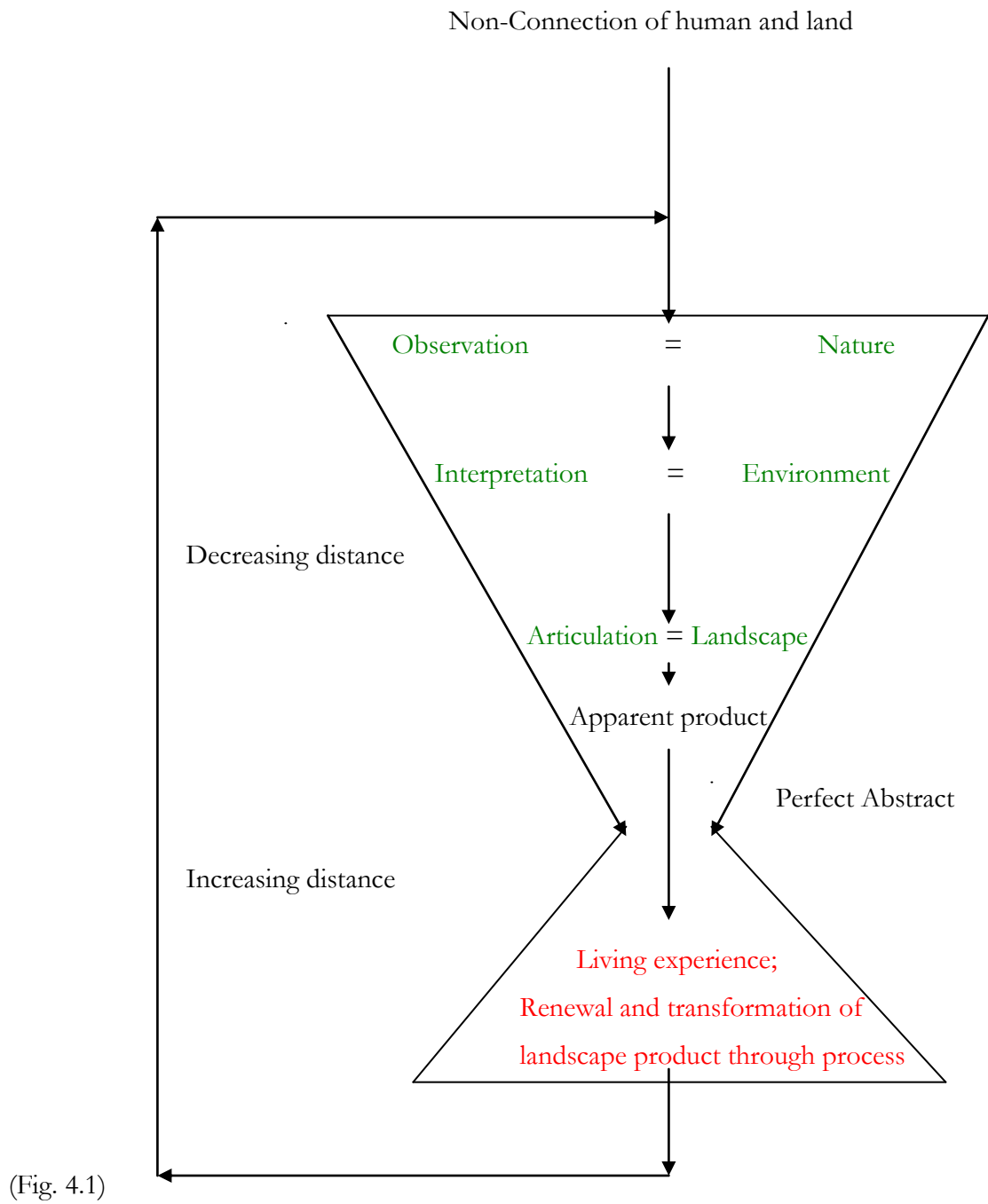
The institution, as understood by Merleau-Ponty, operates through a series of exchanges between subjectivities (intra and inter). In observing, interpreting and articulating situations and collective worlds, we take up the task of reflexivity in order to generate our own self-improvisation. Reading such a sense of self is dependent on being part of a collective not just of community but also of land. This is related to Bachelard's idea of topoanalysis as opposed to psychoanalysis.³⁴¹ Landscape develops self and self develops landscape in that senses of both have abstract durable dimensions but are never reconciled in the manner of their practice.

In understanding the functioning nature of the general and specific, illustrated by community and individual, it is apparent that the search for understanding and explaining landscape should not be based on extrapolating a universality but instead it should be concentrated on extrapolating kinds of universality. To seek an understanding on an entirely inter-subjective level encourages one to look for universality in a universal discourse. To do this is to subvert the subjective, historical and political and other circumstantial sensibilities in which such discourse has its grounding. Understanding such sensibilities as circumstantial allows them the freedom of specificity while also enabling a sense of generality. This is in the knowledge that such social, political, historical or economic circumstances for example, irrespective of their particular manifestation are integral to a landscape relationship and status as something renewable and transformative. This initial or nascent part has come from somewhere, most pointedly perhaps, Heaney's idea of the pre-verbal and the poem of Wordsworth; it has culminated in the formation of an outline.

³⁴¹ Bachelard, G. (1958) Jolas, M. (trans.) (1964) *The Poetics of Space*, Boston, Beacon Press, p. xv.

There is no such thing as an absolute, uncontested and unquestionable universal discourse. There is however, the possibility of a kind of universality that expresses the potentiality of a somewhere from an everywhere or, in reflexivity, vice-versa. It is this ongoing reflexive potential that is at the crux of landscape process. The realities of landscape develop from the production of something from everything. Nature and culture, subject and object, human and land and, general and specific communicate with each other as vague everything categories to produce a something that contributes to a particular reality that is itself never absolute. The synthesis of tensions creates the beginning of a journey without any real end. It is kept in perpetual motion by imperfection the creative power of tensions that are never perfectly reconcilable.³⁴² The following diagram is something of a mental map, outlining an observable general understanding and summarily concludes the process of landscape making as distilled through this first part. It is an on-going process of making and un-making, on-going because perfection is unattainable. This is illustrated by the perfect abstract beyond the cycle. The general structure is bespoke when it comes to suggesting particularity and the way a core universality can appear in different ways to the individual.

³⁴² Cf. Basso, K. (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, p.3ff.



Conclusion

Our fathers knew the value of a screen
From sultry suns, and in their shaded walks
And low-protracted bow'rs, enjoyed at noon
The gloom and coolness of declining day.
We bear our shades about us; self depriv'd
Of other screen, the thin umbrella spread,
And range an Indian waste without a tree.

-William Cowper- 'The Sofa'³⁴³

Developing a landscape idea throughout this section has led to the emergence of a number of pertinent ideas. Landscape is something that is evolving to produce itself. In the process of this developing process human and land evolve. A way of exploring this is through ideas of observation, interpretation and articulation related to evolving ideas of land through 'Nature', 'Environment' and 'Landscape'. In this respect human and land influence each other and develop a sense of self that goes beyond either in isolation to create a sense of self in landscape reality. Illustrating the connectivity of this relationship is the idea of intimacy and the progressive intimacy of communication between human and land that culminates in a landscape product, a momentary articulated reality subject to renewal through ongoing processes of time and experience.

Beyond that the section has cultivated a working dynamic of landscape that is built upon ideas of reconciling traditionally irreconcilable categories. This is achieved in the main by introducing the idea of communication between elements such as subject and object, nature and culture, individual and community and, most significantly, human and land. The boundaries developed by categorical distinction are considered as transformative rather than separating. In the communication of the categorical elements of landscape, tensions are produced that express elemental relationship. In the process of this relationship, an explanatory reality is formed through progressive understanding. This explanatory reality is landscape. Progressive understanding is illustrated by ideas of distance and proximity with landscape articulation expressed at closest proximity between human and land.

³⁴³ Cowper, W., Sambrook, J. (ed.) (1994) 'The Sofa' in *The Task and Selected Other Poems*, London, Longman, p.7.

In the changing realities of landscape, however, this proximity opens out to distance between human and land so that landscape begins in observation of nature progressing through interpretive environment in which human and land are integrated by communication and finally progressing to explain the reality of this symbiosis in the particularity of landscape. Mindful of particularity, there may be an observed distinction between what landscape is in an abstract sense and how it is visibly carried out in practice. There is the potential for infinite ways of doing landscape as propositions towards an abstract sense. This collective reconciliation is facilitated by communication and language and the vague and ambiguous potential of words. So it is that an idea of what landscape is may be considered in the knowledge that there are innumerable ways of expressing it. Landscape is a blend of movement and substance, of being and becoming, and of what and how as befits its status as relationship.

Integral to this relationship and its status through continuity and change is communication. Nature and Culture, Subject and Object, Individual and Community or Human and Land are never integrated fully. Their unity and symbiosis are fulfilled by the necessity of communication and the development of revelatory knowing. Moving to the next part, interpretations of how individuals develop landscape both in the individuality of memory and the contemporary context of community may be traced through a poetic lens. With the understanding that landscape is text in the sense that its realities are built upon expression and rendition, the poetic context offers a suitable means of interpreting landscape development. The poem like the landscape is never finished. It stands set in words but yet it is constantly changing. It embodies an infinite wealth of potential through the means by which it may be articulated and behind the final rendering in speech or on the page, the processes that go into its making. As with a landscape the poem embodies both stillness and movement and its realities are always apt to change through the contingencies of circumstance and experience in the deceptively ambiguous word. The poem allows us the space to interpret the concept outlined in this first part.

Having established use, the remainder of the thesis will be about exploring the functionality of that use in an interpretive sense and then in a more direct, articulated sense. Landscape embodies both use and meaning and the transition from one to the other is part of landscape's processual creative capability. It is a progression that fills the distance between human and land, in a particular way, the writer of this thesis and the lands he seeks to come to terms with. This relationship progresses through a developing intimacy of communication that emerges in the product of a process. Use comes to mean something and that something is landscape as product. That something is open to renewal somewhere in the essentially irreconcilable distance between human and land. In terms of the text and the illustration of this idea in the thesis, it is shown in a narrative shift from third person in the first part to first person by the third part. This thesis is itself an ongoing relationship that feels and finds its way through degrees of distance to a particular meaning in somewhere, from the universality of use in everywhere.

Part Two: Interpretations

An 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria.
- Ludwig Wittgenstein - *Philosophical Investigations*³⁴⁴

Introduction

From the previous section a sense of landscape has developed where it is understood as a relationship and the visible reality of that relationship is its status. This relationship and its changing status are generated in tensions expressed in the communication of its elements. Subject and object, nature and culture, individual and community, general and specific within the overall elemental human and land, cannot be indistinguishably unified. For example, subject cannot become object nor can nature become culture nor can individual become community nor human land. In the friction of their communication a reality is produced that reflects the status of how the tensions relate. In different circumstances and ongoing living, realities change as the experience of living is drawn into the particular sum of a landscape reality. As living proceeds, these realities can be considered in memory and restored to the transformative potential of new realities that filter through the obdurate presence of words.

Ways of articulating and ways of expressing landscape are formed by reaching into experience and memory. As individuals communicating, ways of landscaping are learnt and turns of phrase have the infinite potential to illuminate something in a way that had heretofore lain dormant. As an example of the range of such a ladder of experience³⁴⁵, let us consider for example how Homer wrote *The Odyssey* and how Joyce wrote *Ulysses*.³⁴⁶ The transactions between both authors, between both texts in the way they shape their lands and worlds are a testament to the sociability of landscape and in their articulation and sense of community. This is achieved in such a way that retains a

³⁴⁴ Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford Blackwell (153).

³⁴⁵ "All great storytellers have in common the freedom with which they move up and down the rungs of their experience as on a ladder. A ladder extending downward to the interior of the earth and disappearing into the clouds is the image for a collective experience to which even the deepest shock of every individual experience, death, constitutes no impediment or barrier." Benjamin, W. (1936) 'The Storyteller: Observations on the Works of Nikolai Leskov', in Bullock, M., Jennings, M.W., Eiland, H. & Smith, G. (eds.) (2002) *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol. 3 1935-1938*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, p.157.

³⁴⁶ See for example Joyce, J. (1997) *Ulysses*, London, Picador.

distinct individuality. Neither work is, nor can it ever be, the other. There is an irresolvable distinction. The unresolved tensions in the space of that distinction see a sole constancy in the endless productivity of change and the renewal and transformation of the text through intertextuality. Reading something once and returning to it again with the benefit of experience can produce different results. This change is often found in the tiniest details. By the example of the text and poetry in particular, this lesson of landscape making may be learned.³⁴⁷ Literature is an important conceptual example.³⁴⁸

There is an abstract idea of landscape towards which performance attempts. So it is that landscape is always a collective communication of sameness and difference. It is through sameness of an abstract that we can know the kinds of its difference. With this same sense of tension is geography. Geography embodies sameness and difference in its idea and its realities. Each strand of geographical endeavour is a proposition towards a common ideal of earth-writing. The diversity of its kinds is threaded through the common engaged universality of earth and society. If we can talk of a geography of landscape rather than a landscape of geography, then it is built on the expressive realities of landscape incorporated into a broader context of geographical analysis. The way of thinking about landscape and the discourse cultivated in the previous section may be considered the geography of landscape. This interpretive section may be the application of a geographical way of thinking to landscape processes and realities. If not in unity or synonymy, landscape and geography are in close proximity. Geography is a way of approaching landscape as landscape is a way of doing geography.³⁴⁹

If the making of art and poetry may be considered illustrations and productions of a landscape self, then engaging with poetry may be carried out in a context of deliberations on landscape rather than deliberations on literary merit or judgement. This approach distinguishes this as a work in Geography rather than in English, Philosophy,

³⁴⁷ Duffy, P.J. (2010) 'Introduction: Poetry and Place: When Literature and Landscape Rhyme' in French, T. (ed.) *A Meath Anthology*, Navan, Meath County Council, pp.vii-xiii.

³⁴⁸ Cf. Cresswell, T. (2004) 'Place and Landscape' in Cresswell, T. *Place: A Short Introduction*, Malden MA, Blackwell, pp. 10-11.

³⁴⁹ Cf. Duffy, P.J. (1998) 'Locality and Changing Landscape: Geography and Local History' in Gillespie, R. & Hill, M. (eds.) *Doing Local History: Pursuit and Practice*, Belfast, Institute of Irish Studies, pp.24-46.

History, Sociology or Anthropology. Landscape is a geographical process that is relevant to the interests of other disciplines. It is important to note as well however that the interests of other disciplines are relevant to Geography, adding an outward dimension to the symbiotic character of the subject. So it is that poetry for example may be just as significant to a student of Geography as to a student of English literature. At the kernel of this significance is a sensibility. As Lorimer writes, “an acute geographical sensibility is by no means the exclusive preserve of the fully paid-up professional geographer. After all, the poetics of place are found in *life*.”³⁵⁰

As professional geographers the typical approach might be to see, as Duncan & Duncan argue, “how they act as a mediating influence, shaping behaviour in the image of text.”³⁵¹ Beyond that, the text is considered less an image than a living, changing entity in its own right. In this manner, landscape is not so much *like* a text as a text *is* a landscape. This approach is based on the non-representational argument in which metaphors such as ‘Landscape as text’ are considered to give precedence to cultural construct over the lived experience of everyday life. In a way this fits everyday life into a rigid representational structure without consideration of action and performativity.³⁵² The use of the words ‘as’ or ‘like’ illustrates an idea of representation as a visual reflection. An understanding positing that text ‘is’ landscape is an illustration of action through the strength of a verb.³⁵³ This idea of practice and living is integrated in the landscape idea developing in this work through the idea of flux or “becoming”. On the other hand however, it is unwise to dismiss the idea that landscape cannot be considered in the sense of structured concept. Without a sense of substance or “being”, the processes of performance are quite elusive and difficult to sense leading to a possibility of evaporation.

There is room within a landscape idea for both these positions of movement and substance to co-exist because it is in precisely such tension that landscape is produced

³⁵⁰ Lorimer, H. (2008) ‘Poetry and Place: The Shape of Words’, *Geography*, vol. 93(3), 181-182, (p.182).

³⁵¹ Duncan, J. & Duncan, N. (1988) ‘(Re) reading the Landscape’ *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 6, 117-126, (p.120).

³⁵² See Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.162-166. Thrift, N. (1996) *Spatial Formations*, London, Sage, p.4.

³⁵³ E.g. Mitchell, W.J.T. (1994) *Landscape and Power*, London, Routledge, p.1ff.

and reproduced. Continuing the symbiotically productive motif, this section explores poetry in the context of landscape and this in turn shapes interpretation of the poetry itself by engaging with it in a different kind of way. The poem's mediating influence is illustrated through its communication and the way it influences those who come into contact with it, unconcealing its meanings through the processes of time and experience.

In the vagueness and ambiguity of language, there is a rooted poem through which realities flow in the reading. The poem is an expression that concentrates and contextualises the vastness of the everyday dynamics of language and landscape. From the concentration of everywhere into somewhere, the potential for a kind of universality is realised. As landscapes are formed and reformed through observation, interpretation and articulation, so too are poems formed and reformed in the same way. Significant in this formation and reformation are the tensions between individuals. Speech requires an audience.³⁵⁴ Communication with a wider community can influence the construction of an individual's particular reality. Thus it is that the section will consider the relation of Seamus Heaney's poetry to the poetry, in the main, of Robert Frost, Patrick Kavanagh and finally the Latin poet Virgil. These considerations are defined by a geographical outlook on the process and creation of landscape realities. Poetry and the poetry considered here, is a way of exploring how language is used to express ideas. So it is that the poetry considered here may be contextualised as a case study, a space for the interpretation for the creation of landscape expression with an inherent emphasis on how language is wielded. The subtleties and the many-layered, ambiguous potential of words are most readily apparent in a poetic context.

Ultimately, the reason for choosing these poets in particular, lies in the particularity of the approach this thesis takes. That particularity is based on those poets with whose work the writer of this thesis is most familiar. Another writer in pursuit of a thesis such as this may choose different poets but the general idea of landscape in the sense of an

³⁵⁴ As Patrick Kavanagh writes in *Self Portrait*, "It may be possible to live in total isolation but I don't understand how. The audience is as important as the poet." Kavanagh, P. (1964) *Self Portrait*, Dublin, Dolmen Press, p.14.

abstraction of process and product is a sameness that belies the appearance of difference. Exploring a sense of landscape that is text is a useful way of illustrating this. Texts may be different but there is a general idea of a text which no particular text can fully embody or define in an absolute sense. This boils down to the question of dependence. One person's ideal text may not conform to another's. This second part is, in many cases, a conversation between poets interpreted by the writer of this thesis. This is a particular interpretation of a general idea. There is no authority to say which is right or wrong and so the manner of the form's realisation in terms of its appearance in living is continually changing.

In the infinite potential for change through a creative process such as landscape-making, there is no absolutely right or wrong answer for a landscape reality. Hence, little consideration is given to secondary criticism of the poetry and the implication of grappling pointlessly with different and often contrary readings. In the vastness of scholarship these have different objectives that would risk blurring a geographically centred landscape focus in the complexity of a debate at a remove from direct involvement in explaining and understanding landscape. Such an approach would be as grasping at shadows in constant movement without the substance of standing ground.

In the interests of explanation it is enough to know that there are such diverse complexities in themselves and that they work circumstantially. The elements of everyday speech for instance cannot be studied as a single system because they inveigle their way in from unruly and diverse sources. It is therefore beyond this study to dwell on the details of very many facets. In respect to such detail this study is concerned with unconcealing the idea of potential in detail and if that potential is infinite, if the very fact of its difference has innumerable guises, it is quite naturally beyond the scope of a work such as this to engage with such chaotically disparate realities. In the interests of clarity, focus and illustration of landscape, it is thus proper to focus on the tradition of the poetry itself and how the communication between individuals and land may be distilled through a poetic medium that establishes itself as a single system or a self as initiated in the first chapter of this part, 'Finding a Sense of Self in the Ordinary

Landscape’. This is the first part in an interpretive case study that will lead to the particular first-person expression of the final, third part, ‘Articulations’.

This second part explores landscape through poetic codes of practice, the words and habits of speech that shape an experience of landscape in a poetic context. Where other studies might seek to decode poetic practice by looking into symbolic meanings by references to beliefs, philosophical ideas or political ideology, the focus here is on how landscape is expressed how the poem stands as the product of a processual relationship. It is based on implications for the understanding and explanation of what landscape is in a universal sense as developed in the previous section. It is not a study of people, but of actions and creations through a medium or perhaps a prism of tradition in which people are involved, culminating in the chapter entitled, ‘Dealing with the Friction of Distance in Time and Space’.

Ultimately this second part is about establishing sameness and difference through correlated ideas of tradition and novelty and universality and particularity, underlined in the final chapter of this part, ‘Something from Everything and Everything from Something’. Arrival at this stage emphasizes the idea that there is no right or wrong way of doing landscape but there is a kernel of sameness in the different ways we landscape. Landscape on a fundamental level is about the way human and land relate. In the way we communicate and share our experiences, in the way land is continually changing, that relationship is always changing. The articulated landscape product is an attempt made with the knowledge we have, contingent on our own particular expressive ability. Whether one way is better than another is simply a matter of opinion.

Landscape reality is formed in visible activity. The tradition of landscape artists and artisans of the 18th and 19th centuries such as ‘Capability’ Brown, Humphry Repton or John Constable express such a vision and this continues into modern contemporary landscape art.³⁵⁵ This tradition of landscape artistry will continue in its different guises

³⁵⁵ See Muir, R. (1999) p.164-166; p.212ff. See also Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, pp. 191-198. Rosenthal, M. (1983) *Constable: The Painter and His Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press. Cf. also Olwig, K. (1996) ‘Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86(4), 630-653. Carter, G. et al.

into the future as architects of land shape it and work it to the tune of circumstance through a relationship with land. Landscape art in painting and literature such as that of Gainsborough and Wordsworth was a celebration of pristine nature in the face of encroaching industrial change.³⁵⁶ These are explorations that feel a way into landscape through language, voicing a self that is more than either human or land but something creatively performed between both in a distance. It is about bringing the distance alive and apparent through the transparency of articulated feeling and the product of the process.

In this study, interpretation and conversation with examples, in essence using the meaning of the poetic, is a way of getting to a particular articulated voice of landscape. This interpretive section is a transitional or mediating stage in the process of creating a landscape product, illustrating a move from general use to particular meaning. A focus on poetry or literature is a focus on a particular tradition and a particular aspect of artistry that partakes in a broader context through its ability to express landscape.³⁵⁷ The particularity in contact with the universal presents a way of establishing meaning in use. As this part is based on interpretation and is transitional, the full exploration of a landscape idea cannot conclude with this section in and of itself. So the third and final part will round the process off in the making of a product, articulating landscapes through personal reflection and expression in order to distil a sense of meaning. This is to illustrate a particular way of expressing or 'doing' landscape as the meaningfully articulated product of an interpretation that goes some way to a determination of meaning.³⁵⁸

(eds.) (1982) *Humphry Repton Landscape Gardener, 1752-1818*, Norwich, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts. For a modern example see the work of Nick Miller. Miller, N. (2008) *Trucksapies: Paintings from a Mobile Studio*, New York, New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture. The truck as a mobile studio enables Miller to move around the landscape of Co. Sligo with a fully equipped studio.

³⁵⁶ Cf. Mitchell, D. (2000) *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.225-26.

³⁵⁷ Cf. n.173, p.74

³⁵⁸ Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell: "any interpretation still hangs in the air along with what it interprets, and cannot give it any support. Interpretations by themselves do not determine meaning." (198) see n.540, p.226.

Chapter Five: Finding a Sense of Self in the Ordinary Landscape

It is a test (a positive test, I do not assert that it is always valid negatively), that genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.

-T.S. Eliot -'Dante'³⁵⁹

5.1 Whisperings, Voices and the Shaping of Landscape

In finding a poet to illustrate the making of landscape, it is useful following the lead of Edward Said in *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, to explore the work of a poet who not only writes poetry but also engages in writing that expresses the processes in the making of poetry. By such means are the influences that go into the articulated product illustrated. The making of the product is given context that expands into a wider communicative network or a community of poets among whom knowledge is transferred, worked and developed through a process into some new expression. Accessing this context and behind-the-scenes process, requires a degree of self-effacement so that the poet is shown as part of something wider than oneself. Writing of the poetic process and the means by which a poem finds its voice and articulation on the page and in the minds of its readers illustrates the making of landscape in its process and product. In its most salient respect then a poet who makes landscape and speaks it through the medium of poetry is most illustrative.

One poet to fit such criteria is Seamus Heaney. As a complement to his poetry that is often inspired and written in the ordinariness of everyday landscape, Heaney has written extensively of the processes of its making in such collections as *Preoccupations* and *The Government of the Tongue*. Heaney's poetry often reflects the processes of landscaping in movement through Natures, Environments and Landscapes leading up to the words written on the page and beyond to their reading and reconsideration. One often gets the sense in his poetry that it is formed not by him as poet and subject but himself as part of a collective in landscape. Through his poetry and the exploration of its formation, landscape realities are nurtured through other landscape realities and elicit in their turn, the growth of yet more landscape realities. This process contributes to the potential infinity of landscape's making. Heaney's body of work easily facilitates a study

³⁵⁹ Eliot, T.S. (1999) 'Dante' in *Selected Essays*, London: Faber & Faber, pp.237-281, (p.238).

of landscape making in both abstract form and active manner. For these reasons his poetry shall be at the focus about which this section turns, developing as it does a practical understanding of the theoretical emphasis of the previous section.

In communicating the making of landscape the previous section looked briefly to the example of the poetry and writing of Wordsworth, Emerson, Frost and Heaney. In the context of the previous chapters their poetry has been considered in the formation of a sense of theoretical universality. In the turning circle then, by that very theoretical outline shall the processes and linkages between the poets be explored for practical illustration in the making of an apparent landscape. On reflection, the coming together of such poets was not accidental and was perhaps inevitable due to the deeper communicative links between poets themselves. Thus looking inward to communicative links between poetry and writing on landscape, the making of landscape may be rendered more comprehensively as indeed, may the importance of communication in its making. Part of the effectiveness of that communication is rendered in the influence of those who have moved in and formed similar landscape realities. It is worthwhile considering a fellow Irish poet along with Heaney in Patrick Kavanagh, a poet who set an influential example in ways of landscape for Heaney. This was an influence rendered in the philosophy of such lines as “Clay is the word and clay is the flesh.”³⁶⁰ Not only is clay word and flesh but so too is stone and beyond the Irish context in Frost’s ‘Mending Wall’ ways of landscaping are offered and considered. For poets such as these, the ordinary or the everyday holds a depth of potential for the extraordinary and things that go beyond appearances of the everyday.

Heaney’s ‘Bogland’, expressive of this depth of ordinariness, has been a significant source of inspiration in developing the theoretical substance in making landscape, helping to give voice to the theory and understanding of landscape in its continual development.³⁶¹ Finding a voice or, as Heaney put it, “Feeling into Words”³⁶² is an

³⁶⁰ Kavanagh, P. (1984) ‘The Great Hunger’ in Kavanagh, P., Kavanagh, P. (ed.) *The Complete Poems*, Newbridge, Goldsmith Press, pp.79-80; cf. Heaney, S. (1966) ‘At a Potato Digging’ in Heaney, S, *Death of a Naturalist*, London, Faber, p.31.

³⁶¹ n.216

essential part of the process of landscaping. Communication is central to the philosophy of shaping land and communication through language is central to this thesis' approach to landscape. How the individual assimilates and understands language internally and privately and then processes it externally and publicly to a wider community changes with experience and understanding. The essential vagaries and ambiguities of language etch the revelatory depth of landscape as new ways of looking, understanding and explaining, flesh the bony letters of a word. Forces of observation, interpretation and articulation turn about with time and experience in the space of words. It is a space created by collective interaction of human mind and material land.

Communicating the relationship of landscape or, rather, *the* way in which it is done is a point of intersection for Heaney and Frost in their use of colloquial speech. Work is the most illustrative way of expressing landscape. In mowing, for instance, or watching someone mowing, time is allowed for the space of landscape to grow in the tasks of maintaining a relationship. The work of mowing is a collective enterprise in that one approaches the task to the best of one's knowledge. This knowledge is developed by the lay of land and its contours across which we move. Landscape is left to make in the new space created by the communication of human and land. The noise of work gives landscape its voice. Such imagery is the basis of Frost's poem "Mowing" in which the poet recalls the experience of working in a meadow:

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound ---
And that was why it whispered and did not speak.
It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:
Anything more than the truth would have seemed too weak
To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows,
Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
(Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.

³⁶² Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. (1980) *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61. See n.390.

My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.³⁶³

Frost does not write of a sentimental or romantic rural life as was the case with Wordsworth for example. Instead, Frost writes of its ordinariness and the simple workaday experience of being part of a landscape for its reality as it is rather than what it could be. Though the Romantic Movement was influential on Frost's poetry in the broad sense of finding a voice stimulated by nature, Frost's means of expressing that voice created a different sense of reality.³⁶⁴ Illustrating the Romantic influence and also illustrating the potential for different reality through the individual experience is Frost's use of the first person "I". Similarly, the Romantics subscribed to the belief that poets should "choose incidents and situations from common life and write about them in language really spoken by men" who "belong to humble and rustic life."³⁶⁵ How a landscape reality is achieved depends on one's interpretation of real language and the humble and rustic life. Where for some it is formed in an Arcadian idyll of babbling brooks, lush meadows and lazing under trees, for Frost it is formed through the scythe and the work of mowing.

The poet is sure that the whispers of the scythe "are no dream of the gift of idle hours, /or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf". The revelations of landscape realities are arrived at in different ways. Nature inspires in different ways. Different things are seen and different things are given sensory value. For the poet, his landscape cannot be expressed in idleness. Work and activity make his reality, enriching life in a physical world.

The whisper of the scythe is the language of human and land coming together. It is the sound of a landscape reality in the making. With the prompt of how he works and the sound of a whispering, the poet is presented with and takes a path to make his own particular landscape reality, wondering "about the heat of the sun" or "the lack of

³⁶³ Frost, R. (1986) 'Mowing' in *Collected Poems of Robert Frost*, New York, Buccaneer Books, p.25; appendix p. 277.

³⁶⁴ Cf. Barron, J. N. (2000) 'A Tale of Two Cottages: Frost and Wordsworth' in Wilcox, E.J. & Barron, J.N. *Roads Not Taken: Rereading Robert Frost*, Missouri, University of Missouri Press, pp.132-153.

³⁶⁵ Wordsworth, W. (1802) 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads, with Pastoral and Other Poems', in S. Greenblatt et al. (eds.) (2006) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Vol. 2. 8th ed.* London, Norton, p. 264.

sound". The experience of mowing and the questions and observations raised by its activity distil into a landscape reality to be re-examined when the season revisits. In the rhythmic routine of such practices we are often surprised by our return as they reveal things anew. One does not really know or dwell on making hay, on why it is made the way it is or on why the job is done the way it is. Perhaps it is that one does not need to fully understand why. One allows oneself to be assimilated into a process to see the reality of hay stored in the shed, to nourish the processes of the next year. Knowing that there is no absolute fact in reality makes it the elusive dream of working land. The whispering cannot be heard outright only speculated upon. Visible landscapes are not made in predictability or certainty. It is not known from year to year how the work and activity will materialise only that the work will be done. So it is the mower swings the scythe through the long grass somewhere between sameness and difference where landscape realities are made.

The whisperings of 'Mowing' are of a mower on his own in communion with land, wondering to himself in idle thoughts. Before we know it a poem is wrought, the reality of a landscape is produced for us to share as thought morphs into spoken word. We too can wonder about the meadow, the scythe and the person who is working and the sounds formed. In turn, landscape realities are formed from wonder and the provocation of the poem.

Such ways of communication and influence are not lost on Heaney when he refers to a passage of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. The painter wonders what the poet is doing. Idle thoughts provoke themselves into words. Observations and interpretations nourish articulations. The influence of these thoughts given flight in speech and word carry on from person to person. The gentle spark of a word or phrase enflames a novelty that chafes on the bonds of old thought. By such means are landscape realities forged and re-forged. Words and ways are turned about in the space of landscape as old bonds are burnt in the light of new understanding and explanation.

Painter:

You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication
To the great Lord.

Poet:

A thing slipp'd idly from me
Our poesy is as a gum which oozes
From whence 'tis nourished: the fire i' the flint
Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame
Provokes itself, and, like the current, flies
Each bound it chafes.³⁶⁶

This notion of new ideas forming new landscape realities is illustrated in the connections of Frost and Heaney. The gentle whisperings of Frost's 'Mowing' can be caught in Heaney's 'Man and Boy'.³⁶⁷ The work of mowing is a way of realising landscape realities. Though of course not exclusively influenced by Frost, it does illustrate an assimilation of influence that nourishes a way of understanding and explaining landscape thus creating a new reality.

In earshot of the pool where the salmon jumped
Back through its own unheard concentric soundwaves
A mower leans forever on his scythe.

He has mown himself to the centre of the field
And stands in a final perfect ring
Of sunlit stubble.

'Go and tell your father,' the mower says
(He said it to my father who told me),
'I have mowed it as clean as a new sixpence.'

My father is a barefoot boy with news,
Running at eye level with weeds and stooks
On the afternoon of his own father's death.

The open, black half of the half-door waits.
I feel much heat and hurry in the air.
I feel his legs and quick heels far away

And strange as my own – when he will piggyback me
At a great height, light – headed and thin boned,
Like a witless elder rescued from the fire.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁶ Shakespeare, W., Oliver, H.J. (ed.) (1969) *Timon of Athens*, London, Methuen, 1.1.20; note also the presence of this passage in Heaney's essay 'The Fire i' the Flint: Reflections on the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins'. Heaney, S. (1980) 'The Fire i' the Flint: Reflections on the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.79-98.

³⁶⁷ See Mason, D. (2000) 'Robert Frost, Seamus Heaney, and the Well-Springs of Poetry', *The Sewanee Review*, 108 (1), 41-57.

³⁶⁸ Heaney, S. (1991) 'Man and Boy' in Heaney, S. *Seeing Things*, London, Faber & Faber, p.14; appendix p. 286.

Generations inform generations as ways of knowing and ways of making landscape are passed back and forth in the overlap of communication. This poem voices Heaney's landscape, the people who populated it and formed it, the work carried out in its spaces and the people formed in its space. It is given part of its voice by the example of Frost. By community and communication, landscape realities find their voice. So it is that the reaches of community and communication are extended through the words of the poem so that it stands to be read, to be observed, interpreted and articulated, to be moved about in, environed in and related with whomever it comes into contact.

The soundwaves of communication ripple outward from person to person, from season to season, from poem to poem. Such are the layers collected in experience, the movements back and forth between them and living that sees a landscape find its reality in a moment. As Frost informs Heaney so too will Heaney inform another and so on. When we go back to Frost's 'Mowing', following Heaney's 'Man and Boy' a new layer is discovered in the knowledge. Conversely the same may be said of approaching 'Man and Boy' with Mowing. The poem as the landscape that makes it is changed by the layers of its detail. Frost himself encapsulates this idea well:

We read A the better to read B (we have to start somewhere; we may get very little out of A). We read B the better to read C, C the better to read D, D the better to go back and get something more out of A. Progress is not the aim, but circulation. The thing is to get among the poems where they hold each other apart in their places as the stars do.³⁶⁹

In the stability of material land and human, they are made something more than themselves in relationship. Connected to the rootedness of material there is a movement and a continual generation and regeneration of realities that resemble circulation. In 'Man and Boy' the "open, black half of the half-door waits"; it is always waiting so that we may go through it and illumine it with the experience and circumstance of our living. With the gathering of time and experience, the circle of realities turns. Landscape is an expression of a relationship between human and land and a collective of subject and object, nature and culture, individual and community and sameness and difference by virtue of the way the relationship is lived. For Frost and

³⁶⁹ From Buxton, R. (2004) *Robert Frost and Northern Irish Poetry*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.7.

Heaney working land illustrates getting among elements of land and human so they can be drawn together in the sights and sounds of landscapes.

In the early part of his Nobel lecture, 'Crediting Poetry' Heaney talks of things heard and the formative sounds of his youth. He talks of when as a child in wartime hearing the voices of adults in the kitchen and how they "could pick up the names of neighbours being spoken in the local accents of our parents, and in the resonant English tones of the newsreader the names of bombers and cities bombed, of war fronts and army divisions..."³⁷⁰ Then, getting older, his "listening became more deliberate" as he acquired a growing familiarity with context, circumstance and language. Heaney found a means of expression and explanation in poetry of a phenomenon that was both within and beyond oneself.

Heaney found a voice for his landscapes and realities in a poem that was "most direct, an upfront representation of the world it stood in for or up for or stood its ground against." The intimacy of communication enables landscape formation. Through the medium of poetry Heaney found a way of voicing his place and people. In achieving this Heaney found a source in "Frost for his farmer's accuracy and his wily down-to-earthness."³⁷¹ What Frost developed in his poetry guided Heaney in how he would listen to his world and make his own landscape realities out of a blurry and nebulous feeling.

An expression of this importance of sound in finding a way to understanding and explanation is in the onomatopoeic terms Heaney often uses, as for instance in the Greek word *omphalos* meaning the navel. For Heaney in 'Mossbawn' the water pump symbolised a source of life at the centre of world moving around it. Each time the pump was worked it made the sound "*omphalos*". For Heaney this was his way of hearing the sound of the pump and his way of knowing the landscape. By the example of *omphalos*, a sound universally heard in a working pump is listened to in a particular way. A kind of universality is revealed. Like as not Heaney worked the pump and heard

³⁷⁰ Heaney, S. (1996) 'Crediting Poetry: The 1995 Nobel Lecture', *World Literature Today*, 70(2), 253-259.

³⁷¹ *ibid.*

the gushing sound of its water countless times before he heard it whispering ‘*omphalos*’ in his ear. The place of the pump is reconsidered, its gushing sound re-heard.³⁷² Observations and interpretations are distilled into an articulated reality. Landscape invested with time and experience pays its dividend in ways of knowing.

Ways of knowing landscape are found in communication of human and land. The landscape realities created by this communication are formed and reformed in wider community. The importance of language in facilitating the communication of landscape realities is underlined by Heaney in an Irish context where language and terms of reference are elided as the nuances of a way of knowing *as gaeilge* are eroded. Irish affords a particular understanding, in the case of an Irish landscape, one more historically deep-rooted than an English turn of phrase might afford. In ‘The Sense of Place’ Heaney writes that “The whole of the Irish landscape in John Montague’s words, is a manuscript we have lost the skill to read.”³⁷³ Finding such a skill is the idea when Heaney illustrates his poetic intent in ‘An Open Letter’ “My patria, my deep design/To be at home/In my own place and dwell within/The proper name.”³⁷⁴ The proper name for Heaney though may not necessarily be the proper name for someone else. Thus the task of finding names so that one may be at “home” is a long and arduous journey of discovery in which the personal is found in landscape.

Words such as “*omphalos*” and “*patria*” are not common but illustrate a progressive skill of Heaney’s in making the landscape and developing his own sense of it. It is a skill that can be lost only to be found again when one can translate feeling into words and give an individual reality its say. This is part of the constant renewal of landscape as ways are sought to render realities. Heaney gets this idea across in an interview with John Brown when asked about Frost’s influence on himself and Paul Muldoon,

³⁷² Cf. Lassus, B. (1975) ‘Glasses and Bottles I’ in Lassus, B. (1998) *The Landscape Approach*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. “Everyday objects, more manipulable, also permit reflections on landscape relationships.” p.27.

³⁷³ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘The Sense of Place’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150, (p.132).

³⁷⁴ Heaney, S. (1983) *An Open Letter*, Derry, Field Day Theatre Pamphlets.

Heaney, in his reply considers how “[h]e made me feel that a certain blunt, plonked down thing within me could have its say.”³⁷⁵

Landscapes are made by giving sensory awareness a particular expression.³⁷⁶ It is finding a way of making sounds like gushing water or crackling hay or whispering swale into some sort of meaning. Sometimes they find some resolution as in the ‘*omphalos*’ of Heaney’s Mossbawn³⁷⁷ while other times the reality of landscape is simply in the questions rather than the answers prompted by the sounds. Sounds come together to give a sense of a larger reality.

This idea is derived from Frost’s concern with expressing “The Sound of Sense” as “the abstract vitality of our speech.”³⁷⁸ It is a rendering in words of raw sensory perception that is of something almost beyond words.³⁷⁹ The onomatopoeic word is perhaps the clearest elucidation of landscape as a communicated relationship. It is a word made by human and land together. Hearing an outer sound, the person seeks to explain it by repeating it and knowing it. Thus, we read “Mowing” and simultaneously hear the swishing and whispering of the scythe. Upon reading “Stopping by the Woods,” one clearly hears the sweep of easy wind and downy flake. To read “Birches” is to vividly sense the breezy stir that cracks and crazes the trees’ enamel. In these words are ways of knowing the sounds and sights we experience in everyday life: the swirling of wind, the stir of leaves in autumn, the downy snowflakes of winter, the whispering swish of long grass in summer and the cracking early spring frost. The example of Wordsworth was influential in developing this idea of a sound of sense with Frost. Landscape is formed not only with a seeing eye but also a listening ear.

³⁷⁵ Brown, J. (ed.) (2002) *In the Chair: Interviews with Poets from the North of Ireland*, Cliffs of Moher, Salmon Publishing, p.80.

³⁷⁶ Cf. Hetherington, K. (2203) ‘Spatial Textures: Place, Touch and *Praesentia*’, *Environment and Planning A*, 35, 1933-1944.

³⁷⁷ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘Mossbawn’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.17-28.

³⁷⁸ Letter from Robert Frost to John Bartlett, July 4, 1913, quoted from Boyd-White, J. (2001) ‘Making Meaning in the Sentence’ in Boyd-White, J., *The Edge of Meaning*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, pp.104-132, p.112.

³⁷⁹ See Steele, T. (2000) ‘Across Spaces of the Footed Line’: The Meter and Versification of Robert Frost’ in Faggen, R. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Robert Frost*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 123-155. See Heaney, S. (2003) ‘Above the Brim’ in Bloom, H. (ed.) *Bloom’s Modern Critical Views: Robert Frost*, Philadelphia, Chelsea House, pp. 201-219.

When Wordsworth said, “write with your eye on the object”... he really meant something more. That something carries out what I mean. By writing with your ear to the voice. That is what Wordsworth did himself in all his best poetry, proving that there can be no creative imagination unless there is a summoning up of experience, fresh from life which has not hitherto been evoked... As language only really exists in the mouths of men, here again Wordsworth was right in trying to reproduce in his poetry not only the words – and in their limited range, too, actually used in common speech – but their sound.³⁸⁰

In this way of communicating not only is there a sound of sense but sound also makes sense in common language. Sights, sounds, smells and tactile objects go into the making of our sense of landscape reality. Heaney’s *omphalos* illustrates this idea, a sensory sound that is almost but not quite beyond words. Formed into word and name of landscape reality it makes sense as sense makes word.

For Frost, he needed to find his own voice and to find a middle ground between speech of book and speech of life. The onomatopoeic sound of sense achieved this to his satisfaction and would provide a way of feeling into voice for Heaney. For Frost without this sound of sense “all the tones of the human voice in natural speech are entirely eliminated, leaving the sound of sense without root in experience.”³⁸¹ Experience for Frost was necessary to achieve a sense of proper reality. The intonations, dialects and idiosyncrasies of language acquired in experience and the lived life and words connecting a proper feeling from person to land and world make self and a proper sense of self in landscape reality. Finding this proper kind of expression, Heaney can “do more than make an arrangement of words: I felt that I had let down a shaft into real life.”³⁸² It is through such processes that Heaney arrives in the poem to render its landscape as he does and to communicate a reality that is not merely the product of a subject acting on an object but a reality both creative of and created by landscape as product and process.

³⁸⁰ Back further again, Frost notices such an approach in Shakespeare: “When I think of successful poetic drama I think of the speaking passages. They are the best of Shakespeare to me. Lean, sharp sentences, with the give and take, the thread of thought and action quick, not lost in a maze of metaphor or adjective.” Tilley, M.P. (1918) ‘Notes From Conversations with Robert Frost’, *Inlander*, XX, 3-8, quoted in Newdick, R.S. (1937) ‘Robert Frost and the Sound of Sense’, *American Literature*, Vol. 9 (3), 289-300, (p.295).

³⁸¹ Newdick, R.S. (1937) *op cit.*, (p.290).

³⁸² Heaney, S. (1980) *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London: Faber and Faber, p.8

5.2 Digging for a Self

Landscape is both process and product. As a relationship or a status of relationship, landscape as a collective of human and land manufactures realities developed from particular instances of experience and circumstance. As a self-contained entity in the sense that landscape produces itself as reality from itself as process, the momentum is not only circular but also revelatory in how the circle is turned. In the relationship of human and land over time and experience different aspects and ways of knowing are revealed in rooted sameness as different ways of performing landscape are revealed in the sameness of the word. Landscape is the macrocosmic self of a microcosmic human and land. Drawn together, they reveal something to each other in communication that radiates as reality. Frost's landscapes are revelatory as the sound of sense in language is an inward revelation along roots that "drove far down into the rich soil of really vital human experience."³⁸³ For Heaney there is also a sense of this revelation of something that was there all along and buried from sight and sense. For Heaney as with Frost the way they reveal landscape is through an almost archaeological understanding that culminates in a poetic explanation. Poetry is a way of landscaping. For Heaney poetry is

a revelation of the self to the self, as restoration of the culture to itself; poems as elements of continuity, with the aura and authenticity of archaeological finds, where the buried shard has an importance that is not obliterated by the buried city; poetry as a dig for finds that end up being plants.³⁸⁴

Past landscapes can reveal oneself to oneself and in this revelation a reality greater than the sum of either human or land individually is renewed and transformed. This sense of continuity and change is illustrated in Heaney's poem 'Digging'. The sound of the "clean rasping" spade in the "gravelly ground" is sensed in a different way. It is by knowing where he has come from and the ways wrought in his culture, community and place that a restorative transformation is revealed through the macrocosmic landscape self. The poet moves beyond the framework of a history in landscape and yet manages to remain within it to reconcile change with continuity, recycling a new landscape from old ones. The old ways of landscape still remain though, to be nourished by memory.

³⁸³ *ibid.*

³⁸⁴ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, p.41.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.

Under my window a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade,
Just like his old man.

My grandfather could cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, digging down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.³⁸⁵

The idea of working with the earth or land gives expression to landscape in the same way as Frost's whispering scythe does in 'Mowing'. 'Digging' is a particularly good example of this engaged relationship that has the ability to renew and transform in the revelation of different things by the same method. As with 'Bogland', traditions are formed and pioneers set the tone for the ways we interact as part of landscape. The

³⁸⁵ Heaney, S. (1966) 'Digging' in Heaney, S. *Death of a Naturalist*, London, Faber, p.13; appendix p. 281.

possibilities of learning are endless in tradition, heritage, circumstance and vision.³⁸⁶ In 'Digging' the poet's father moves 'stooping in rhythm through potato drills'. The rhythm of stooping through potato drills comes as easily as breathing. He gives it no thought, he simply moves in rhythm with the earth. In the same way his own father before him shows similar rhythm in the way he 'fell to right away/Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods/Over his shoulder' Learning from this rhythm the poet understands it and explains it in his own words. It is through learning these ways of landscape that they are not buried in time but renewed and transformed into life. From a relict find to a growing plant a new reality blooms in landscape.

In the rhythm of landscape and ways of digging, moving through potato drills and the neat nick and slice of turf sods there is grace and in grace there is art.³⁸⁷ In the different ways of simple chores and tasks there is universality beyond their immediate appearance. For a moment the poet almost laments when he has 'no spade to follow men like them.' But this does not matter since he can carry on the tradition of his forebears in another kind of universality. As long as 'the squat pen rests' he can dig with it into the living roots of memory and experience. Universality is in the sameness of what landscape is as abstraction. In the everyday activity of landscape both digger and poet express the ways of a landscape relationship. Each activity for all its difference is a proposition towards an absolute of landscape. Through renewal and transformation, this absolute way is never made apparent because it doesn't visibly exist. We know what landscape is but we cannot know with certainty how it should be manifest. As a result there are always different ways of doing the same thing and it is often the case that we look to our history for guidance and understanding so that we may explain through our own unique circumstance the macrocosmic self of landscape. Landscape is never either sameness or difference but both collected and connected in a tension that produces continuity in changing realities. These realities go from embryonic and nebulous feeling

³⁸⁶ Cf. 'Bogland': "Our pioneers keep striking/Inwards and downwards,/Every layer they strip seems camped on before./ The bogholes might be Atlantic seepage./ The wet centre is bottomless. Heaney, S. (1969) 'Bogland' in Heaney, S. *Door into the Dark*, London, Faber, p.56; appendix p. 283. See n.216.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Plato, Lee, D. (trans.) (1955) *The Republic*, London, Penguin, Bk. III 398-403; Aristotle, Tancred Lawson, H.C. (trans.) (1991) *The Art of Rhetoric*, London, Penguin, III, 8. 1-4; also Buser, T. (2006) *Experiencing Art Around Us*, London: Thomson Learning.

to the revelatory clarity of word and deed as they are transformed into new realities again in the tensions of a landscape relationship.

This idea is illustrated in the reality of the poem. Returning to the poem 'Digging', Heaney considers that he might have written a couple of lines a little differently. For Heaney reading the poem the reality of it has changed and though he thought his feelings had gotten into words then, now they might have gotten into different words. The sound of sense in its noises still resonates but they are now heard more as a self-absorbed digger than a theatrical gunslinger:

Digging', in fact, was the name of the first poem I wrote where I thought my feelings had got into words, or to put it more accurately, where I thought my *feel* had got into words. Its rhythms and noises still please me, although there are a couple of lines in it that have more of the theatricality of the gunslinger than the self-absorption of the digger.³⁸⁸

This transformation of reality can be seen within the poem as well as through the hindsight of the poet. In the beginning couplet of 'Digging' he speaks of how 'the squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.' By the end of the poem the squat pen doesn't rest as a gun as though it were about to kill off a preceding heritage and tradition.³⁸⁹ Instead "The squat pen rests. I'll dig with it." The poet has found a sense of self beyond his own microcosm in the macrocosm of a landscape that holds history, heritage, culture and knowledge. By this connection all the facets of these repositories are imbued with revelatory potential. As the father and grandfather dig with spades so will the poet dig with his pen. There is a realisation that poet, father and grandfather are going through the same thing manifest in different ways. In the hindsight of the poet we can see that self and expression of the self both in the microcosm of the individual and the macrocosm of landscape is not fixed and can be articulated in different ways. Making a landscape, or perhaps becoming part of a landscape, explains a sense of self to Heaney.

³⁸⁸ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61, (p.41).

³⁸⁹ In a letter to Jon Stallworthy Heaney describes the influence of the gun as coming from having watched too many war movies and the general sense of explosive diction may have been influenced by Ted Hughes. Stallworthy, J. (1982) 'The Poet as Archaeologist: W.B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney', *The Review of English Studies, New Series*, 33(130), 158-174, (p.163).

The worth of the poetry considered so far is manifest in its sound and the sound of a universal sense given an explanation. This is hinted at by Heaney when he comments that the noises of ‘Digging’ still please him. It is this kind of universal and the fleshing of onomatopoeic sounds with particularity that makes them accessible universally. Around these noises and sounds and their visualisations each individual brings their own disposition and experience to flesh the same word with different thought processes and different explanations. These do not materialise out of nothingness and are guided by a tradition of understanding and explanation in community and culture. Vagueness and ambiguity, different ways of reading the same thing, create flowing renewal in landscape. Landscapes reveal new dimensions to experience as experience reveals new dimensions to landscape. As with Frost and Heaney after him, a listening ear granted to the ordinariness of the everyday hints at an instinctive and invisible simplicity. The reader almost wonders why such things were not noticed before by themselves. This might be the case with “*omphalos*” in the working pump for example or the whispering of a blade cutting meadow grass. Heaney articulates a sense of this idea:

In practice, you hear it coming from somebody else, you hear something in another writer’s sounds that flows in through your ear and enters the echo-chamber of your head and delights your whole nervous system in such a way that your reaction will be, ‘Ah, I wish I had said that, in that particular way.’ This other writer, in fact has spoken something essential to you, something you recognise instinctively as a true sounding of aspects of yourself and your experience.³⁹⁰

In a similar way, Walter Benjamin writes in ‘The Storyteller’ that “Experience which is passed on from mouth to mouth is the source from which all storytellers have drawn. And among the writers who have set down the tales the great ones are those whose written version differs least from the speech of the many nameless storytellers.”³⁹¹ The written version that differs least is the sounds heard in everyday and their rendering into speech. It is often the case that these sounds are struck in ways of landscape and so landscape is the storyteller. The landscape rendered in these sounds gives a universality in which any particular kind can be explained. Land and human learn from each other

³⁹⁰ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘Feeling into Words’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-6, (p.44).

³⁹¹ Cf. Benjamin, W. (1936) ‘The Storyteller: Observations on the Works of Nikolai Leskov’ in Bullock, M., Jennings, M.W., Eiland, H. & Smith, G. (eds.) (2002) *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings: Volume 3: 1935-1938*, Boston Mass., Harvard University Press, p.144.

to make a collective expression in landscape. As an example of this Heaney uses Wordsworth's 'River Derwent'. For Heaney the poem illustrates how "we come to the beautiful conception of the River Derwent as tutor of his (Wordsworth's) poetic ear. The tongue of the river, he implies, licked him into poetic shape; the essential capacity was, from the beginning, the capacity to listen."³⁹² The example of Wordsworth's making of a landscape and the music of that landscape in the sounds of language is a tutor to both Frost and Heaney and illustrative of the communication that makes landscapes from landscapes.

Landscape is renewed and transformed as we move in time and experience with these sounds. A meaning of landscape is picked up from sounds and translated by each individual in language. For example the sound of a shovel digging in clay, rubber tyres crunching on gravel, a lawn mower cutting grass, a lorry rumbling on the road, cars cutting through wind, rustling leaves, the crackle of frosted grass underfoot or an opening or closing door brought to our attention can be read in many different ways through individual significance. They reach a listening ear through a conspiracy of circumstance to search for explanation in language. Like Frost, Heaney saw the value of Wordsworth's example in this regard.

Wordsworth had to grope along the grains of the language to find the makings of a music that would render not so much what Hopkins called the inscape as the instress of things, known physically and intuitively at such times. His great strength and originality as a writer came first of all from his trusting the validity of his experience, from his courageous and visionary determination to *eriger en lois ses impressions personnelles*.³⁹³

Circumstances conspire to make landscapes in particular ways as laws, if they may be so called, of reality are made through personal impression. The circumstance of the individual carries a particular instance of landscape, one which reaches the clarity of thought and the expression of articulated language. In another time and another mind such things may go unnoticed. Landscapes are communicated most effectively when they reveal something that was there all along but escaped notice. It is by grasping our

³⁹² *ibid*

³⁹³ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Makings of a Music: Reflections on Wordsworth and Yeats' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.61-79 (p.69).

attention and forming realities with us that a macrocosmic self is revealed and renewed in landscape. Self is revealed to self in everyday living. Poets such as Frost and Heaney pick up on the sounds of everyday life that we often fail to notice or take for granted in the monotony of routine. Sharing their kinds of universality with us we are encouraged to consider our own kind of universality in landscape or to see the laws in our own impressions.

The way we hear the realities of landscapes communicated with us influences our vision and our articulation of our own realities. With only the ability to speak from where we are, we look for examples from similar places and circumstances. For Heaney the down-to-earth, deceptively simple rurality of Frost resonated with a child of the rural. It did not matter much that Frost was American and Heaney Irish since the universality of essential sounds of sense could carry in Heaney's articulation of his landscapes. By the example of what Frost was doing with poetry, Heaney was influenced in how he would do poetry. The tension of both sameness and difference in landscape mean that the poetry of Frost and Heaney may in a sense be somewhat alike but they are not the same hence, abstract proposition rather than abstract certainty. Sounds carry between humans, echoing back through the reverberations of the land to strike them anew. As feeling is made into word, self is revealed and restored by self as landscape is by landscape.

This idea of landscape as always having something to reveal is considered by Heaney in his poem "The Diviner". Rather than being created out of nothing, revelations have their genesis in something. Finding examples influences our creations and designs, informing or revealing the particularity of our own articulations. In many ways the diviner is like the poet as in many ways the poet is like any individual in the making of landscape.³⁹⁴ Landscapes are revealed through empathy and openness to discovery. Like poetry all means of engagement in landscape from walking to digging to water divining,

³⁹⁴ Heaney himself speaks of the resemblance of the diviner to the poet in Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61, p.48. He likens it to the technique of the poet and "what allows that first stirring of the mind round a word or an image or a memory towards articulation. He calls on Frost as an example: "a poem begins as a lump in the throat, a homesickness, a lovesickness. It finds the thought and the thought finds the words." Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61 (p.49).

stone-picking, painting, playing sport, driving or photography reveal some sense of reality and a restoration of some hidden facet. Through communicating these activities ways of discovery are opened up for others. Everyone is a designer of landscape as it is a way of storytelling of imagining and extrapolating visions of reality in landscape.

The landscape reality as product is a living setting from which meanings, values, understandings and explanations organically grow in considering what is here and there. In the process new realities are opening up. The poem is as much a setting as the field and the crafts of interacting and cultivating a landscape relationship set us example and potential in their ways. Though such crafts as water divining and mowing with a scythe may be considered antiquated or obsolete, they set an important example in the making of landscape. It doesn't matter if we cannot divine water or if we cannot swing a scythe these things manage to speak to us in the sound of their sense and their sense is in the form of landscape through which there is infinite potential in the manner of expression. In the revelation of past landscapes, examples are guides and influences transformative:

Cut from the green hedge a forked hazel stick
That he held tight by the arms of the V:
Circling the terrain, hunting the pluck
Of water, nervous, but professionally

Unfussed. The pluck came sharp as a sting.
The rod jerked with precise convulsions.
Spring water suddenly broadcasting
Through a green hazel its secret stations.

The bystanders would ask to have a try.
He handed them the rod without a word.
It lay dead in their grasp till, nonchalantly,
He gripped expectant wrists. The hazel stirred.³⁹⁵

The green hazel links the water-diviner to the earth but also conducts the bystanders watching on. They “ask to have a try” and without a word he passes it on. Without the connection to the diviner though, it lies “dead in their grasp”. Forming a connection “He gripped expectant wrists.” By establishing a sense of communication and the

³⁹⁵ Heaney, S. (1966) ‘The Diviner’ in Heaney, S. *Death of a Naturalist*, London, Faber, p.36; appendix p. 282.

course of rhythm, “The hazel stirred.” In the communication of everyday and the living speech of the poem the poet grips the expectant wrists of the reader which in turn cause the stirrings of meaning and value in often unpredictable but always restorative and transformative ways.

Landscape is imbued with potential energy. In this way everyone is a diviner in the way they communicate landscape. A poem such as this is merely an illustration of interaction. The ways in which people speak of landscapes like the way the bystanders of the water diviner will speak of their experiences preserves continuous change and keeps momentum, transformation, restoration and renewal in the social art of landscaping. The convulsions of landscape are unpredictable in a future unknown and experiences not yet encountered. Landscape is an unpredictable convention in continual self-reproduction in articulation. Heaney speaks of articulation not only in terms of “argument or explication but in terms of its own potential for harmonious self-reproduction.”³⁹⁶ This empathetic harmony of human and land in landscape expresses a potential to fuse, in so far as communication allows, nature and culture, subject and object, individual and community and tradition and novelty.

³⁹⁶ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘Feeling into Words’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61, (p.49).

Chapter Six: Dealing with the Friction of Distance in Time and Space

The hiding places of my power
Seem open; I approach, and then they close;
I see by glimpses now; when age comes on,
May scarcely see at all, and I would give,
While yet we may, as far as words can give,
A substance and a feel to what I feel:
I would enshrine the spirit of the past
For future restoration.
- William Wordsworth. - 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads'³⁹⁷

6.1 A Traditional Novelty

In talk of 'Bogland' in 'Feeling into Words', Heaney describes its genesis as an Irish answer to an American tradition. He "had been reading about the frontier and the west as an important myth in the American consciousness, so I set up – or rather, laid down – the bog as an answering Irish myth."³⁹⁸ Landscape myths and realities raise questions that find answers in new realities. Though Frost and Wordsworth were, among many others, important formative influences on Heaney, they lacked the real nuts and bolts dialect of Heaney's environment. The sound of sense in these poems illustrated a way of making landscape as incipient examples that needed reconciliation in the living speech of his place and the particularity of its sound. In other words Heaney needed to find a particular kind of explanation for a universal understanding. This was something that could be aided by considering the tradition of more local examples and transforming them with the benefit of his individual experience and wider communication with the likes of Wordsworth and Frost into the novelty of a different landscape reality.

Perhaps the most dominant presence in Irish poetic circles is W.B.Yeats.³⁹⁹ Writing of Yeats in his essay on 'The Makings of a Music' which was also written in reference to

³⁹⁷ Wordsworth, W. (1802) 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads, with Pastoral and Other Poems', in Greenblatt, S. et al. (eds.) (2006) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Vol. 2. 8th ed. London, Norton, p. 264. Cf. Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London: Faber & Faber, pp.41-61, (p.41).

³⁹⁸ Heaney (1980) p.55.

³⁹⁹ For an exploration of the literary traditions that preceded Yeats and those that environed his work, see Foster's forthcoming *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances*. Foster, R.F. (forthcoming, 2011) *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Wordsworth, Heaney explores Yeats' search for "sweet sounds."⁴⁰⁰ Quoting a passage from Yeats' 'Adam's Curse'⁴⁰¹, Heaney notes that scrubbing pavements and breaking stones "are contrasted with the craft of verse only to partake of its nature in the context of the poem itself."⁴⁰² The craft of verse is held apart from more ordinary crafts so that their connection is only incidental. It is not that the sounds form the poem but that the sounds are silenced by the poem. In this respect Heaney prefers the ability of Wordsworth to listen and respond to Nature rather than Yeats' ability to rein it in.⁴⁰³ A sort of empathy with the land and responding to it through the expression of a landscape relationship is the approach preferred by Heaney. It should not be so much the case that "All reality comes to us as the reward of labour"⁴⁰⁴, but that all reality comes to us as the reward of simply living in which labour may be circumstantial rather than essential. It is from the day to day life of moving and working in landscape that its realities are formed. For each individual there are often different and contrasting ways of living - where Heaney chooses to let something grow organically into expression, Yeats' would prefer to hammer something into expression. Neither approach is right or wrong but simply different and noted as such in a common endeavour to articulate a voice of experience that inevitably makes place and landscape. Poetry is simply an example of the general making of landscape reality through lived experience. There must be a particularity of kind to access a sense of universality.

Thought must be guided to expression and a language of articulation that can be digging potatoes, idly chatting across a wall, walking down a street or tying words in verse and prose. In any case the practicalities of poetry as an example are useful in illustrating a kind of universal sense of making landscape. People always strive for a language that expresses themselves to their liking. The fact that this is never absolutely resolved illustrates there is no right or wrong way of making landscape. It simply makes itself out of experience and the particularity of circumstance. Landscape can be made

⁴⁰⁰ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Makings of a Music: Reflections on Wordsworth and Yeats' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.61-79 (p.75).

⁴⁰¹ Yeats, W.B. (1904) 'Adam's Curse' in 'In the Seven Woods' in Yeats, W. B. (1994) *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, Hertfordshire, Wordsworth Editions Limited., pp.61-79, (p.64).

⁴⁰² Heaney, S. (1980) p.75.

⁴⁰³ Heaney, S. (1980) p.73; also Stallworthy, J. (1982) 'The Poet as Archaeologist: W.B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney', *The Review of English Studies, New Series*, 33(130), 158-174.

⁴⁰⁴ Heaney (1980) p.73.

through conscious effort and experience sought out. Consequently, landscape may be made with or without conscious intentionality. The communication of words, the sharing of language in communities and dialects, in reading and visual, in sound and listening, feed into doing things that involve human and land in a collective status of landscape.⁴⁰⁵ From the processes of this relationship, stories and conversations and communications contribute to a particular explanatory reality. Heaney expresses this idea in the mechanics of poetry: “The concern is for syntax the controller, the compelling element that binds the constituent elements of sense into active unity.”⁴⁰⁶ At a fundamental level the elements of human and land are drawn together by communication thereby facilitating an active and productive unity. Landscape is an active unity. Poetry is a useful setting to develop an awareness of landscape as abstract and activity. Its communicated example helps to form incipient realities as sameness and difference move through the substance of words making new traditions.

Like Heaney’s ‘The Diviner’, landscaping is about cutting into the rhythms of past, present and future and of individual and community and the texture of past landscapes. This awareness formulates in landscape in all its rudiments and ordinariness whether one is cutting grass, planting trees, sowing vegetables, making hay, walking down a street, driving in a city centre, looking from a height, saving turf in the bog, the activities are endless. However they all come from somewhere and they are all going somewhere. They are restorations of pasts transformed into new contexts with new individuals as they themselves will go on into new somewheres and new realities.

In the continuing formation of new realities, there is tension with existing tradition. In dialogue with Yeats, Heaney was trying to express what made him distinct and different, what it was that made a landscape his own in such a way as to fit into a tradition and yet change it enough to continue its relevance and validate his new reality. Heaney’s poetic landscapes were not so much formed as a reaction against a Yeatsian tradition but rather as a reformation of understanding place and landscape in which

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. Max-Neef, M. (1992) ‘Development and Human Needs’ in Ekins, P. & Max-Neef, M. (eds.) *Real-Life Economics: Understanding Wealth Creation*, London, Routledge, pp. 197-214.

⁴⁰⁶ Heaney (1980) *op cit.* p.73.

experience formed to be communicated through the poem. As Joyce's Daedalus might put it, the continuous effort is to elude a long shadow of tradition and fly by its nets.⁴⁰⁷ For Heaney it seems there is a struggle to fly beyond the nets imposed by Yeats' taking of the poetic process as "not one of complaisance but of control".⁴⁰⁸ Crucially as an illustration of the different ways of approaching experience and the sounds of sense generated in nature and environment, Heaney notes that "Yeats does not listen in but acts out. The origin of the poetry is not a matter of sinking in but of coming up against, the mature music is not a lulling but an alerting strain."⁴⁰⁹ It seems then that Yeats deafens Heaney's ear for the gentle articulation of the poetic craft or rather the particular way he wishes to articulate it. This also has the effect of removing Heaney from a closeness to his land and the craft by which he speaks of it. The dominating influence of Yeats thereby removes him from the satisfaction of a landscape well rendered. In coming up against it he is distracted by its alerting strain and deafening roar. Sometimes it seems the cacophony of voices heard and the "net of associations"⁴¹⁰ can become overfull.

Tellingly of an influence almost despite himself, Heaney claims of 'The Tower' from Yeats' *Collected Poems*⁴¹¹ that "this is theatrical in its triumph, and many of the high moments in the *Collected Poems* share its rhetorical cast."⁴¹² Heaney had noted looking back on his poem 'Digging', that it was theatrical in places with the intonation that he might have written it a little differently.⁴¹³ Nevertheless though, a theatrical tinge crept in to the written poem. Whether this was due in some way to the influence of Yeats' we shall never know for certain but it does seem at least possible. The idea of theatricality and of rhetoric for Heaney and Frost too seems to have the effect of separating one from land and the nascent potential of contact with nature. Such rhetorical elements Heaney notes evoke a spirit of bragging and a sense of authority that "arises from

⁴⁰⁷ Joyce, J. (1996) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, London, Penguin Popular Classics, p.231.

⁴⁰⁸ Heaney, S. (1980) op cit. p. 71.

⁴⁰⁹ *ibid.* p. 72.

⁴¹⁰ Heaney, S. (1980) "The Fire i' the Flint: Reflections on the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins" in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.79-98 (p.83).

⁴¹¹ Yeats' W.B. (1928) 'The Tower' in Finneran, R.J. (ed.) (1989) *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, New York, Collier Books, p.194; appendix p. 297ff.

⁴¹² Heaney, S. (1980) 'Makings of a Music: Reflections on Wordsworth and Yeats' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.61-79, p. 73.

⁴¹³ See p.171 above, n.388.

Yeats's certainty that 'all the old writers, the masculine writers of the world, wrote to be spoken or to be sung, and in a later age to be read aloud for hearers who had to understand swiftly or not at all.'⁴¹⁴ In the case of Heaney and Yeats it seems that they are of very different perspectives generated by the circumstances of different lives and experiences.

A tidy way of illustrating this sort of linked difference is in the approach of both poets to Edmund Spenser, the sixteenth century agent of the British crown in Ireland. Writing in his *Essays and Introductions*, Yeats had no illusions of Spenser's presence and perspective as an official in a country seeing that which his state agency desired him to see, he also notes that had Spenser gone as a poet in search of the country's imaginative poets his imagination of a country and a landscape would be enhanced. Yeats considered Spenser a "poet of the delighted senses."⁴¹⁵ The language of Yeats and the sound of his sense were such that developed from a tradition more in line with Spenser than the Irish poets of imagination. This is illustrated by Heaney's interpretation of a hard-line language that could be understood swiftly or not at all by a reading audience presumably of predominantly Irish make-up. Yeats wrote and expressed his landscapes as products of the processed circumstances and experiences of his lived life. The individuality of that life appears to contrast heavily with the individuality of Heaney's living experience. The contrast in experience and ways of living formed differing approaches to observing, understanding and explaining through the sensed language of landscape.

The contrast between Heaney and Yeats is underlined by Heaney himself, quoting a passage from Yeats' 'Autobiographies', noting the pleasure of rhyme in a Protestant Orange book and the dreams of Orangemen fighting Fenian rebels. Such experiences seemed to contrast for Heaney as a Roman Catholic. Thus views of country and senses of its peopled landscapes were naturally to be rendered differently. Stallworthy encapsulates a sense of this difference in the substance of Spenser's presence

⁴¹⁴ *ibid.*

⁴¹⁵ Yeats, W.B. (1961) 'Edmund Spenser' in Yeats, W. *Essays and Introductions*, London, Macmillan, p.372. Cf. Stallworthy, J. (1982) 'The Poet as Archaeologist: W.B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney', *The Review of English Studies, New Series*, 33(130), 158-174.

commenting that where Yeats was of the tradition of Spenser, Heaney was of the tradition that burnt down Spenser's castle.⁴¹⁶ This point is well noted in Heaney's 'Bog Oak' where "[p]erhaps I just make out Edmund Spenser, dreaming sunlight, encroached upon by geniuses who creep 'out of every corner of the woodes and glennes' towards water-cress and carrion."⁴¹⁷ This is a reference to a passage of Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, a passage Stallworthy notes, is quoted also by Yeats in his essay on Spenser.⁴¹⁸

Seemingly flip sides of a coin, Heaney in communication with Yeats' poetry, responded to it and perhaps accentuated the contrasts to make his own voice heard, a particular articulation that was visible by its difference. It is in communication with tradition and reading of past historical landscapes that particular ways of expression are formed. The dominant presence of Yeats and the language of his poetry and landscape would ensure that Heaney could not but be influenced in some way by the presence of his work by reaction, response or affirmation. In another example of tension, it is through the tensions of traditional and modern that senses are developed.

The wonder of landscape is the relationship between human and land and the larger context of world around in society and lands. The materiality of Irish land is the same but moving through that sameness is a continual difference nurtured in the circumstances of everyday life. Landscape as a status and relationship illustrates that there is no right or wrong way in the proposition of its fulfilment. Landscape realities form and are formed by opinion rather than fact. The fact of landscape is in its abstraction and this is not apparent in the day to day differing ways of its making. The extremity of Yeats and Heaney as an example shows how landscape realities are made in difference and it is in the common element of what they are doing in poetics and landscape that such difference may be visibly communicated and considered. Communicated influences are drawn out and drawn together in the rendering and re-

⁴¹⁶ Stallworthy, J. (1982) op. cit. p.159.

⁴¹⁷ Heaney, S. (1972) 'Bog Oak' in Heaney, S. *Wintering Out*, London, Faber & Faber, p.15; appendix, p. 284. Cf. Stallworthy (1982) op. cit.

⁴¹⁸ Spenser, E., Hadfield, A. & Maley, W. (1633; 1997) *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.101-102. Cf. Yeats, W. (1961) *Essays and Introductions*, London, Macmillan, p.374. See Stallworthy (1982) op. cit. p. 160.

rendering of landscape reality. It is the revelation of difference in sameness and sameness in difference that landscape realities may be known. The space of a landscape relationship and the differences in its circumstances make a great deal of difference in how people react, see, hear and sense each other's expressed reality.⁴¹⁹ The fragile landscape reality is rendered in the moment where circumstances social, cultural, economic and political coalesce with the sensory visual, auditory and olfactory circumstances facilitated through environmental surround.

The instantaneous communication of these factors makes the particularity of meaning and value in landscape; let such meaning and value be for instance in theatricality and rhetoric or "down-to-earth" reality. Looking at a field for example, one might get a different feel or sense of it or render it in different language, perhaps some that allow a flow of the colloquial or some that push for an altogether different mode of expression. Hindsight and the malleability of the material land to the sensory human makes landscape a changing space and status, articulated in different words in different moods, with different intentions. The words of their making are not of any subject human of an object land, but of something larger than subject or object in landscape. The words of everyday reality do not and nor can they, hold the responsibility of absolute fact.⁴²⁰

How Heaney makes the reality of poetic product from poetic process is quite different to Yeats. Both however, are equally validated in producing landscape to their liking. Where Heaney believes in digging down into oneself to restore something that was there all along, Yeats, according to Heaney, believed there "was no recollection in tranquillity, not a delivery of the dark embryo, but a mastery, a handling, a struggle towards maximum articulation."⁴²¹ This forcible struggle towards a masterful articulation is offset against Heaney's organic sense of feeling into words.⁴²² The poetic process teaches us about the landscape process. Experiences and circumstances of the

⁴¹⁹ Cf. Sennett, R. (1994) *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilisation*, London, Norton & Co., p.17.

⁴²⁰ Cf. Sennett, R. (1994) 'Logos and Mythos' in Sennett, R. *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilisation*, London, Norton & Co. pp. 80-82.

⁴²¹ Heaney (1980) p.75.

⁴²² See Heaney's reflection in 'Feeling into Words' on writing 'Bogland'. As a poem "it all released itself" "I wrote it quickly the next morning, having slept on my excitement". Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61 (p.55).

individual see differing approaches to the making of landscape. The material poem, the material map, the material land in and of itself is not enough. We seek something beyond them to our liking. Their materiality is scaffolding for our expression. Communicated, this expression is then scaffolding for other often different expressions. Yeats had a basic understanding of the need to find a language to one's liking. For Yeats:

It was a long time before I had made a language to my liking; I began to make it when I discovered some twenty years ago that I must seek, not as Wordsworth thought, words in common use, but a more powerful and passionate syntax, a complete coincidence between period and stanza.⁴²³

Each individual is located within a verbal tradition through which landscapes are made. For the poet most ostensibly there is a challenge working in an existing tradition to make one's own voice heard. For both Yeats and Heaney there was a challenge in finding a language and a way of expression in which they could articulate their own distinctive poetic sense of reality. Significantly though, they went about making this expression by different means. Illustrated by contrasting responses to Wordsworth, the making of landscape and poem was a different proposition so that each could weave novelty from the general tradition in which they found themselves in their own particular way.

Illustrating this struggle for a distinctive voice from a dominant tradition, Heaney notes through 'Yeats as an Example?' that "a very great poet can be a very bad influence on other poets".⁴²⁴ Perhaps there is something in this of Yeats influencing Heaney's thought to such a degree that in Yeats' poetry Heaney saw things he could have written himself.⁴²⁵ In 'Envies and Identifications'⁴²⁶ Heaney, illustrating the tension between tradition and novelty, juxtaposes the bad influence of the great poet with the realisation that poets "turn to the great masters of the past, they turn to an image of

⁴²³ Heaney, S. (1980) p.75.

⁴²⁴ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Yeats as an Example?' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.98-115, (p. 109).

⁴²⁵ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Feeling into Words' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.41-61, (p. 44). Cf. a similar situation involving the poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and John Keats (1795-1821) with Schama (1996) op cit. noting of the perched nightingales in beech trees "where Keats listened as Coleridge's huge, unstoppable *vox humana* drowned them out." p.521.

⁴²⁶ Heaney, S. (1985) 'Envies and Identifications: Dante and the Modern Poet', *Irish University Review*, 15 (1), 5-19.

their own creation, one which is likely to be a reflection of their own imaginative needs, their own artistic inclinations and procedures.”⁴²⁷ The poet wants to be close to tradition and yet wants away from it. Somewhere between these wants, voices are made and landscapes are made by the voices.

Landscape is a collective relationship of human and land. The status of that relationship depends on how tensions like subject and object, nature and culture, personal and public and traditional and modern interact. In Yeats’ poetry, Heaney finds understanding in the tension between life and work. It is from the very work of rhetoric that action of a lived life emanates and so life and work knit together. There is for Heaney:

much to admire in the intransigence of the stance, as I find much to commend and imitate in the two things that Yeats was so often determined to set at loggerheads, his life and his work:

The intellect of man is forced to choose
Perfection of the life or of the work
And if it take the second must refuse
A heavenly mansion, raging in the dark.

What is finally admirable is the way his life and work are not separate but make a continuum, the way the courage of his vision did not confine itself to rhetorics but issued in actions.⁴²⁸

As things are read and reread, engaged with and communicated with, new aspects are revealed. The reality of approaching Yeats’ poetry changes for Heaney from reaction to reformation. It is the discovery of congruous expression emanating from tensions that relate to each other without ever quite unifying entirely that allows formation and transformation. The everyday life is lived in actions and these actions articulate landscape in the way they are performed. The way one acts depends on where one is and the circumstances of one’s environment. If there may be understood a universality in action as a form, then the particular manner of expressing the form of action for Yeats is in rhetorics. Heaney discovered that Yeats poetry was not a universal of kind but in fact a kind of universal. Yeats’ poetry represented a particular way of doing things but not the way one must do things. There is sameness in the form of action as

⁴²⁷ Heaney, S. (1985) op cit. p.5.

⁴²⁸ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘Yeats as an Example?’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.98-115 (p.100).

there is difference in its manner. Universal is action and kind is its rendering through landscapes in the moments of lived life. Discovery of ways of understanding colour how we engage with tradition and develop it into the making of particular landscape realities. The substance of history and tradition hold a potential energy given kinetic movement in the revelatory novelties of living.

Reading Heaney's idea of the poet in *Government of the Tongue*, the poet is considered a mediator whose power to a large extent depends on an ability to establish original relationships between individual and reality.⁴²⁹ This ability to generate original relationships illustrates novelty, renewal and transformation. Realities are always changing. The individual is constituent in reality. So the poet is a mediator less between an individual and a reality than between realities. In other words the poet's task is communicating a reality to an individual and its originality is manifest when something is revealed to the individual. The work of the poet is simply a more intensely marked example of everyday living in the sense that ways of understanding and developing original realities are rarely given such consciously expressive energy. The individual forms a reality according to the factors that shape the physical spaces we occupy, to the way we communicate with that physicality and, to the way we understand and explain the world of which we are a part to others. For the poet, the poem then is a medium for the articulation of such relationships as ordinary conversation is in day-to-day living. Landscape realities change according to the status of how the relationship of human and land is embodied. It is a relationship that moves with time, experience and circumstance. The task of the poem is to make us conscious of our own realities by communicating its own.

In Heaney's poem 'The Follower'⁴³⁰ this idea of forming and communicating realities is given another expression through the activity of ploughing. The poet as ploughman not only ploughs the repository of his own experience, memory and culture in a self revelatory action but, the ground is also prepared for the sowing, cultivation and

⁴²⁹ Heaney, S. (1988) 'The Government of the Tongue', in Heaney, S. *The Government of the Tongue: The 1986 T.S. Eliot Memorial Lectures and Other Critical Writings*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.91-109 (pp. 92-3).

⁴³⁰ Heaney, S. (1966) 'Follower' in 'from Death of a Naturalist' in Heaney, S. (1998) *Opened Ground: Poems 1966-1996*, London, Faber and Faber, pp.3-15 (p.11) appendix, p. 283.

revelation of others ideas and the generations that follow. Heaney evokes this in 'Makings of a Music' by relating the idea of poet as ploughman to Wordsworth's poetic voice. Recalling the sound of sense in Wordsworth's voice reminds him of a description by Edwin Muir of plough horses that seem to be standing still and moving at the same time. "Their hooves like pistons in an ancient mill/Move up and down, yet seem as standing still".⁴³¹ Somewhere in the collective energies of standing still and moving are landscape realities made: in the fragile moment where communication prompts memory and memory prompts present, present prompts future in the continuum of lived life. The tension between tradition and modernity and also between different traditions illustrates that there is no right or wrong way of doing landscape and the generation of novelty as a product of tension is itself only a proposition to form the base of another novel reality. Resolution is never found but novelty is always found through communication of realities and the negotiation of their tensions.

6.2 Making Strange

As it is, Heaney, though influenced by a wide community of poets, is not any one of them. His voice is found in the dialect of his own place and the locally specific accretion of landscape realities over time. By virtue of the influence of Yeats and Frost among others, Heaney's articulated realities are derived from different traditions and in novelty of expression he relates them through his own original, individual significance. For the poet as mediator between realities or facilitator of communication between realities there is a challenge in finding a voice that not only sounds in speech of book but also speech of life. For Frost, these aspects of speech were related by his idea of a sound of sense.⁴³² Circumstances mean that the sound of sense is often expressed in different ways. There is a task in making different ways known to each other through a common middle voice.

⁴³¹ Heaney, S. (1980) 'Makings of a Music: Reflections on Wordsworth and Yeats' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.61-79 (p.65).

⁴³² pp.166-167, n.380.

Heaney explores this idea in “Making Strange”.⁴³³ The poet is challenged to find a middle voice when a well-travelled urbane American encounters his local and rustic neighbour in Derry. Underlined by the consideration of Frost as an American and so not directly expressive of Heaney’s local sound of sense, Frost exemplified *what* could be done but Heaney would have to discover for himself *how* it could be done in the particularity of his own experience and circumstance. Heaney would have to happen upon its vernacular whisperings, environ himself within an observed nature to express a landscape as a relationship of diverse traditions, also developing a further layer of experiential reality in his place.

The contrast to be negotiated is illustrated in the third stanza of ‘Making Strange’ when the poet finds himself a mediator between “one with his traveled intelligence /and tawny containment, /his speech like the twang of a bowstring, /and another, unshorn and bewildered/in the tubs of his Wellingtons, /smiling at me for help”.⁴³⁴ The sounds of guidance are sensed in the known field across the road. As a mediator his role in making landscape is different than if he had been in the company of one other or other of them alone. The circumstances of this particular scene and moment see a new landscape nurtured. The poet finds a middle voice that renews his landscape. “Then a cunning middle voice/came out of the field across the road/saying, ‘Be adept and be dialect,”.⁴³⁵ To have any sense of sincerity the poet must remain true to his dialect. However, he can also move that dialect around and expand it. He can shape the land in terms “of this wind coming past the zinc hut, /call me sweetbriar after the rain/or snowberries cooled in the fog.”⁴³⁶ However land is shaped in different ways so that the fields and roads are rendered in different ways according to the circumstances of a landscape relationship. This allows him in the status of a landscape relationship to “love the cut of this travelled one/and call me also the cornfield of Boaz.”⁴³⁷

⁴³³ Heaney, S. (1984) ‘Making Strange’ in Heaney, S. *Station Island*, London, Faber & Faber, p.32; appendix, p. 285.

⁴³⁴ *ibid.*

⁴³⁵ *ibid.*

⁴³⁶ *ibid.*

⁴³⁷ *ibid.* On this see Fumagalli, M.C. (2001) *The Flight of the Vernacular: Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott and the Impress of Dante*, Amsterdam, Rodopi. In “Making Strange” Heaney “suggests that his literary ambition is to “tell of [the] wind coming past the zinc hut,” of the “sweetbriar,” of the “snowberries” and, at the

These connotations involve ideas of loyalties that converge without infringement in a middle voice. Ruth the Moabite who was a model of loyalty and devotion to her late husband in choosing to remain with her mother-in-law Naomi, was eventually married to Naomi's kinsman Boaz, Boaz having noticed her working in his cornfield.⁴³⁸ The obscurity of this reference illustrates the malleability of landscape by virtue of its detail, its revelatory potential and its ability to make one's sense of self in its movements. In detail there is a kind of universality in which everything is connected and related to everything else. Aspects of self are married together in middle voice and in the comfort one finds in the revelation of self in landscape, loyalties to pasts and presents are maintained. In a way such references in "Making Strange" illustrate something of a marriage between theory and practice. Part of the learning curve of this section is testing the theoretical elements of landscape through the interpretation of poetry to gain insight to landscape in the everyday human experience, showing us who we are by where we are.⁴³⁹ As an abstract, landscape is beyond either land or human so that the proposition of a reality is neither certain nor fixed in a constant search for somewhere in the middle ground.

By virtue of the openness of landscape in the sense of how it is malleable to the subtleties of action, dialect and expression, the poet can "Go beyond what's reliable/in all that keeps pleading and pleading,/these eyes and puddles and stones".⁴⁴⁰ Eyes, puddles and stones look to be found and known. The place wants to be known as much as the speaker wants to know it. The well-travelled American and the local neighbour both illustrate aspects of the poet's self. Part of landscape relationship, the poet can attempt to come to terms with the tensions he finds himself between. The immediacy of being between two very different people emphasizes the contrasts within himself and pressurizes a proposition of some kind of middle voice.

same time, to locate this landscape, and the situation he finds himself in, within the cornfield of Boaz": i.e., within the force-field of a biblical parallel rich in connotations." p.17.

⁴³⁸ Fumagalli (2001) op. cit. p.17.

⁴³⁹ Cf. Bachelard's (1958) idea of topoanalysis p.111-12 above.

⁴⁴⁰ Heaney, S. (1984) 'Making Strange' in Heaney, S. *Station Island*, London, Faber & Faber, p.32.

The poet of 'Making Strange' finds himself unsure of his voice and unsure of his way through the place in which at one time he seems to have been well-versed. On the one hand Heaney wishes to maintain his tradition and his origins but on the other he must communicate effectively to a wider audience beyond the locality of his dialect. It seems the poet's vernacular has changed from his being away. The landscape is unknown so that in separation the poet finds himself in tension with a past reality. Buxton, quoting Borroff, considers that Frost offers a way of dealing with such a tension in his discourse of a common level of style that represents a selection rather than a reproduction of vernacular and colloquial.⁴⁴¹ By the precedence of such an example, Heaney is encouraged to be confident in his selections and adept in walking a middle line between what he knows now and what he knew then. He should not try merely to reproduce his past realities but take selections from his past realities and graft them into new realities embodying a sense of continuity and change. In the process of this he unconceals and restores landscape, transforming it from new aspects with new words into new propositions that subscribe to a sense of commonality by their rootedness.

Evident in 'Making Strange', the middle voice coming across the road from the field asks the poet to "recollect how bold you were/when I visited you first". For the poet to be involved in the relationship that makes reality and place, it is not enough to mindlessly repeat and copy what he thinks is expected. Instead, he should develop his own sense of the place according to its traditions and according to the circumstances in which he finds himself beyond tradition. In the comings and goings of time and the accretion of experience the poet is laden "with departures you cannot go back on." The speaker cannot change the circumstances that have brought him to this point where he has to develop a new reality, to know the language in the fields and roads of his place again in a way that shares commonality with both his companions. Land and speaker negotiate a reality when he senses the sound of how "A chaffinch flicked from an ash"⁴⁴². Individual and land become permeable to each other. In the revelation of smallest details, places are made. The simple incidental sound of the chaffinch is universal enough in its sameness that particular different realities may communicate in

⁴⁴¹ Buxton, R. (2004) *Robert Frost and Northern Irish Poetry*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 49-50.

⁴⁴² Heaney, S. (1984) 'Making Strange' in Heaney, S. *Station Island*, London, Faber & Faber, p.32.

the making of a new landscape reality as a middle voice between two contrasting realities.

Hearing the sound of the chaffinch flicking catches the speaker almost unaware because “next thing/I found myself driving the stranger/through my own country, adept/at dialect, reciting my pride.”⁴⁴³ With the revelation of the flicking chaffinch a new reality is understood and it is explained to the stranger. He has found his country again and in the pride of its rediscovery he can lead others through it by the articulation of his dialect. The type of place or the sense of place one seeks is expressed through the action of landscape.

In search of appropriate articulation the poet himself was a stranger to his own country. It was silent and unfamiliar. He felt separated from it. He was almost at a loss till he heard the flick of the chaffinch. Finding or making landscape, human and land interact. Rather than saying anything himself, the poet quietly got a sense of his surroundings and by communicated sounds a landscape reality developed. In allowing himself to be environed he could draw on the strands of past dialects in landscape to form new dialect and new reality. Consequently “all that I knew”, “began to make strange/at the same recitation.”⁴⁴⁴ His place had to grow accustomed to the new reality of its features. In sameness difference is found and in continuity there is change. Landscapes are made through sameness and difference and continuity and change. The making of a landscape by selection in memory and consciousness rather than exact reproduction and copy illustrates this. The new voice does not make the place more intelligible by making it familiar but rather renders a new imaginative territory in which local vernacular is fused with a broader sophistication. In so doing a reality is made which conserves the potential for future revelation and new realities.

The restoration of place by the activity of landscape is done in a way that transforms place. This transformation is often rendered in the ambiguity of its language. ‘Making Strange’ may be taken to mean a subject drawing away in fear or in defensive reaction

⁴⁴³ Heaney, S. (1984) op. cit. p.32.

⁴⁴⁴ *ibid.*

but it may also be taken to mean that objects make themselves unfamiliar.⁴⁴⁵ The making of the landscape and the development of a sense of place is an expression of a relationship between elements subject and object so that neither one is clearly distinguishable. Landscape reality is an expression of how elements communicate with and relate to each other. This relationship is never completely resolved but ongoing so that all realities are practical propositions rather than absolutes, as might be understood in an abstract sense. In *Government of the Tongue* Heaney writes in a similar vein of Sylvia Plath's poem 'Mussel Hunter at Rock Harbor' claiming that the discovery of a shell brings a "certain founding of identity and security" in the "drama of survival".⁴⁴⁶ The making of landscape as proposition to an abstract sense may be considered somewhat in the sense of Plath's final line from the poem 'Blackberrying', where she writes of her landscape looking out on the nothingness of the sea: "Of white and pewter lights, and a din like silversmiths/beating and beating at an intractable metal."⁴⁴⁷

There is an aloneness in this poem that underlines the reality of its landscape. From the opening line: "Nothing in the lane, nothing, and nothing but blackberries." there is a sense of self elucidated in the reality of her landscape and by the closing line it is a landscape she cannot escape from. The rendering of a landscape between these lines in terms of warmth and colour holds some potential. Finding the warmth of "sisterhood" and "accommodation" with the blackberries is juxtaposed with the nothingness of the sea. It is a cycle that cannot be escaped from. Plath's poetry also resonated with Heaney and this may be seen in his poem 'Blackberry-Picking' at the close of which the speaker laments the loss of his harvest to fermentation and rot so that "Each year I hoped

⁴⁴⁵ See Parker, M. (1993) *Seamus Heaney: The Making of the Poet*, Iowa, University of Iowa Press, p.189. Parker discusses this ambiguity in the meaning of the phrase 'making strange'. "In his first dialect, Hiberno-English, 'to make strange' means 'to be unfriendly', 'to draw back in fear', 'to react defensively' as his fellow countryman does, as he himself used to. To the world of academe however, 'making strange' conjures up the name of Victor Shklovsky, the Russian formalist critical theorist, who asserted that art sharpens and intensifies our perceptions of the world by making objects 'unfamiliar', a process he terms *ostranenie*." See also Crawford, L. (1984) "Victor Shklovskij: Différance in Defamiliarization." *Comparative Literature* 36 (3), 209-19.

⁴⁴⁶ Heaney, S. (1988) *The Government of the Tongue*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.158-159; Plath, S. (1958) 'Mussel Hunter at Rock Harbor' in Plath, S, Hughes, T. (ed.) (1981) *The Collected Poems*, New York, Harper Perennial, p.95; appendix, p. 292.

⁴⁴⁷ Plath, S. (1961) 'Blackberrying' in Plath, S, Hughes, T. (ed.) (1981) *The Collected Poems*, New York, Harper Perennial, p.168; appendix, p. 294.

they'd keep, knew they would not."⁴⁴⁸ Each year is a cycle of the lost and found in the intractable tension of nature and culture.

This idea is also linked with Frost's poem 'After Apple-Picking' in which the speaker "cannot rub the strangeness from my sight", aware of the knowledge that his labour and desire will never be perfectly fulfilled, he is "overtired of the great harvest I myself desired." And apples fallen to the ground go "surely to the cider heap/As of no worth." Despite this tiredness however his ladder points "Toward heaven still, /And there's a barrel that I didn't fill".⁴⁴⁹ In the ongoing drama of survival and the strangeness it often makes, a fragile reality provides a moment of security and identity until strangeness is made again in new revelation from which a new reality may be retrieved but there is a feeling that the sense of happy belonging imbued by such a reality will be lost in its fragility.

In his essay 'The Sense of Place', Heaney writes of the Irish context and the "need to retrieve the underlay of Gaelic legend in order to read the full meaning of the name and to flesh out the topographical record with its human accretions."⁴⁵⁰ In 'Making Strange' the poet's work is retrieval and restoration but also transformation. It is about communication between human and land and a listening ear to the whisperings of its details. More than retrieving the underlay of Gaelic legend it also involves retrieving the more ordinary and everyday stories and legends; ones that are not necessarily committed to annals but to the trees, fields, houses, streets and roads committed to by those who know them. Permeability to communities and pre-existing realities help to unconceal the details of a place and the layers of landscaping that have gone into its making. Relating to land and community the individual shapes and is shaped by realities making continuity and change in ongoing landscape accretions.

⁴⁴⁸ Heaney, S. (1966) 'Black-berry Picking' in Heaney, S. *Death of A Naturalist*, London, Faber, p. 20; appendix, p. 282.

⁴⁴⁹ Frost, R. (1946) 'After Apple-Picking' in Frost, R. *Collected Poems*, New York, St. Martin's Press, p.224; appendix, p. 278.

⁴⁵⁰ Heaney, S. (1980) 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London: Faber &Faber, pp.131-150 (p.132).

The stories told not only by word of mouth but in the sound of detail in environment speak not only of sentimentality and aesthetic but also of practicality so that one may be open to what Heidegger calls the “thingness of things”.⁴⁵¹ Heaney himself talks of a sense of occlusion with the aesthetic eye of the tourist. Lacking knowledge and the practicality of detail, all one can do is rejoice in “the picturesqueness of it all” and “the fact that it is unspoiled”.⁴⁵² It is to be enjoyed as spectacle and here, in echoes of a guiding Claudian tradition, the visual sensibility comes into its own. The intricacies of detailed knowledge are obscured by the broad-stroked grandiosity of the scene in an articulation leaning to the awe-inspired and celebratory. As Gibbons notes with reference to Irish romanticism, “Perception is accorded no primacy over language, so that there is little evidence of any wish to apprehend nature in a pristine unadulterated state, free from any symbolic or linguistic contamination.”⁴⁵³ While this may have been the wish of American romanticism in contrast to the Irish, language and symbolism inveigle at an intersection of culture and nature and this is yet another example of different routes to an ideal.

Beyond the gaze however, the potential for revelation in detail and the sedimentation of detailed and rooted experience begets new layers. Perhaps this illustrates the distinction between landscape and place. While landscape and the activity of landscaping are general and wide ranging as human experience, place on the other hand, is experience in the circumstances of the specific and rooted.⁴⁵⁴ Heaney talks of the tourist eye that feels little “knowledge of the place, little enough of a sense of wonder or a sense of tradition.”⁴⁵⁵ The process of landscaping does not require a locational tradition or a locational knowledge. It is a constant and on-going process resulting in products determined by the circumstantial embodiment of an individual in a physical world. Place however, to be termed such, requires tradition and knowledge and a deep

⁴⁵¹ Heidegger, M. (1971) *Poetry, Language, Thought*, New York, Harper Colophon, pp. 213-229.

⁴⁵² Heaney, S. (1980) op. cit. p.132.

⁴⁵³ Cf. p.70, n.161; Gibbons, L. (1988) ‘Romanticism, Realism and Irish Cinema’ in Rockett, K., Gibbons, L. & Hill, J. (eds.) *Cinema and Ireland*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, pp.194-258 (p.208).

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Lowenthal, D. (1978) ‘Finding Valued Landscapes’, *Progress in Human Geography*, 2, 373-418. See also Muir, R. (1999) ‘Landscape and Place’ in Muir, R., *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan, pp.271-297.

⁴⁵⁵ Heaney, S. (1980) p.132. Cf. p.84-85 above on the idea of the postcard.

association with older culture that stirs beyond the visual for instance, to a deeper sense of embodiment.⁴⁵⁶

Place and the experience of place are fused into landscape. It is a particular expression of landscape. In the continued action of landscape in a locationally specific context, layers of detail uncovered in everyday experience reveal new reality. As the details of these realities gather over time a sense of place is developed. Interpreting the title of Heaney's collection *District and Circle*, there is a district and there is a circle back to it.⁴⁵⁷

Heaney claims in 'The Sense of Place' that to find a sense of meaning it is necessary that "the features of the landscape are a mode of communion with a something other than themselves, a something to which we ourselves might belong."⁴⁵⁸ Landscape is a relationship and its changing realities are an expression of its status. In the communion of landscape, material and human features develop into something other than themselves. Finding a way to express that other and finding a sense of belonging is the challenge of negotiating tensions. Almost as an outsider with one hand on tradition and the other on modernity, Heaney seeks a way between both, negotiating a belonging to something beyond him and the nature of the world in which he finds himself.

Illustrating the terms of this tension between individual and land is in the contrast of direct experience in the poetry of Frost and Heaney. Where Frost talks of himself as a mower and mowing, Heaney talks of the mower and watching the mower at work. This idea is also shown in 'Digging' where Heaney is looking on rather than actually doing the digging. "Under my window a clean rasping sound/When the spade sinks into

⁴⁵⁶ Cf. Duffy, P.J. (2004) 'Unwritten landscapes: reflections on minor placenames and sense of place in the Irish countryside' in Clarke, H., Prunty, J. and Hennessy, M. (eds.) *Surveying Ireland's past: multidisciplinary essays in honour of Annegret Simms*. Dublin, Geography Publications, 689-711. See also, Spirn (1998) "In an unfamiliar place, senses sharpen, a survival instinct; in familiar territory, senses dull, and it takes an effort to refresh them. Trying to read a foreign landscape is, for me, like reading Dutch, with English as my native language, Danish my fluent second, German limited: I may not understand everything, but I get the gist. Still, missing the meaning of a single key word or landscape feature can mislead. The language of landscape makes significant details stand out and helps me frame questions, but reading landscape deeply requires local knowledge. On foreign ground one needs an interpreter." Spirn, A.W. (1998) *The Language of Landscape*, New Haven: Yale University Press. p.4.

⁴⁵⁷ Heaney, S. (2006) *District and Circle*, London, Faber.

⁴⁵⁸ Heaney, S. (1980) 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.132).

gravelly ground:/My father, digging. I look down”.⁴⁵⁹ He landscapes, but in a different way to Frost. Where Frost writes with direct involvement in the activity, Heaney writes with a concern for expressing the activity, for expressing the middle ground that seeks to stay with tradition but also to break away from it as he moves up and down the rungs of Benjamin’s ladder of experience.⁴⁶⁰ More apparent than Frost, Heaney’s struggle was seeking for himself how he could express his own vernacular and landscape in the fullest possible manner.

Throughout the poems considered here there is a sense that the poet seeks to belong to a communal sense of experience and this is illustrated in talking of digger and of the mower rather than as the digger or mower. There is another layer of detail as yet hidden from the poet. On one level we know where we are but there is a sense that we are on shifting ground that we can never know everything or be completely unified with land or place. This idea is exemplified in ‘District and Circle’: “Through galleried earth with them, the only relict/Of all that I belonged to hurtled forward”.⁴⁶¹ Away from a place and its community we look back through space and time to a relict sense of belonging and security. When we return physically we can find a same sense of belonging but in a different way, it is something that has to be found and found again. A sense of place is translated from one condition of landscape to another. In the case of ‘District and Circle’, this is lived and expressed through the trains of the London underground.

In this sense of outsideness or distance from place and its community, Heaney found an example in Patrick Kavanagh. Illustrated in ‘The Sense of Place’ and earlier in ‘From Monaghan to the Grand Canal’⁴⁶², Heaney notes that “Patrick Kavanagh’s place

⁴⁵⁹ Heaney, S. (1966) ‘Digging’ in Heaney, S. *Death of a Naturalist*, London, Faber; appendix, p. 281.

⁴⁶⁰ Benjamin, W. (1936) ‘The Storyteller: Observations on the Works of Nikolai Leskov’ in Jennings, M.W., Eiland, H. & Smith, G. (eds.) (2002) *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings: Volume 3 -1935-1938*, Boston Mass., Harvard University Press, p.144.

⁴⁶¹ Heaney, S. (2006) ‘District and Circle’ in Heaney, S. *District and Circle*, London, Faber, p.19; appendix, p. 290. Contrasting the comparatively recent publication of this work with earlier work from 60’s, 70’s and 80’s illustrates that this issue of belonging is never really resolved and new ways of coming to terms with landscape and place are rendered in the articulated realities of the poems which come out of a space between tensions of past and present and nearness and the far-away that interlink with tensions between human and land and individual and community.

⁴⁶² Heaney, S. (1980) ‘From Monaghan to the Grand Canal: The Poetry of Patrick Kavanagh’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London: Faber & Faber, pp. 115-131 (p.121).

was to a large extent his subject...his quarrel with himself was the quarrel between himself and it, between the illiterate self that was tied to the little hills and earthed in the stony grey soil, and the literate self that pined for 'the city of kings/Where art, music and letters were the real things'."⁴⁶³ In this Kavanagh realises the significance of the local and the parochial in making place. The illiterate self of the little fields is ironically made so by the increased literacy acquired beyond them. It is worthwhile noting that these struggles for an elusive sense of place are expressive of the process of landscape and its articulation of a reality with the on-going tensions and quarrels unlocking the potential for new realities.

Returning to a place as in 'Making Strange' can leave one stuck for words unable to understand and speak the dialect of place. What was once reliably thought of as certain is no longer so. Something like this is illustrated in Frost's 'Mending Wall' where the neighbour trots out the old reliable utterance "Good fences make good neighbours". For the poet this no longer makes sense and he questions the wisdom of mending the wall, asking "Why do they make good neighbours".⁴⁶⁴ Asking these questions, making observations and forming them from a past reality begins renewal because of strangeness found. Coming to terms with strangeness involves coming to terms with tensions that can never be absolutely reconciled. Such tensions appear to be reconciled in a sense of reality that is a proposition along with past experiences, present circumstances and future possibilities. There is a fidelity to tradition but in the renewal of language and dialect, tradition evolves and continues onward to make places of landscapes. The friction of distance is creative.

⁴⁶³ Heaney, S. (1980) 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London: Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.137).

⁴⁶⁴ Appendix, p. 277.

Chapter Seven: Something from Everything and Everything from Something

When through the old oak forest I am gone,
Let me not wander in a barren dream,
But when I am consumed in the fire,
Give me new Phoenix wings to fly at my desire.
- John Keats – ‘On sitting down to read *King Lear* once again’⁴⁶⁵

7.1 Universal Colloquialism

Illustrating difference between Yeats and Kavanagh, Heaney implies an idea of scale. “Where Yeats had a conscious cultural and, in the largest sense, political purpose in his hallowing of Irish regions, Kavanagh had no such intent.”⁴⁶⁶ For Yeats’ hallowing of Ireland there was a one-sided, maybe English, Romantic view that Lysaght would call “a sentimental, pastoral view of nature and countryside based on continuity, belonging and fruition.”⁴⁶⁷ By the influence of a national scale for Heaney, a flip-side of “discontinuity, exile and sterility” was occluded.⁴⁶⁸ This occlusion was revealed through the contrasting scale of Kavanagh’s poetry built from the dialects and intricate details of small fields and the realities of the everyday. In such circumstances does Frost’s sound of sense carry a greater resonance, as demonstrated by the flick of the chaffinch in ‘Making Strange’.

⁴⁶⁵ Keats, J., Hirsch, E. (intro.) (2001) ‘On sitting down to read *King Lear* once again’ in *Complete Poems and Selected Letters of John Keats*, New York, Modern Library, p.297.

⁴⁶⁶ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘The Sense of Place’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London: Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.137).

⁴⁶⁷ Lysaght, S. (1997) ‘Contrasting Natures: The Issue of Names’ in Wilson-Foster, J. (ed.) *Nature in Ireland: A Scientific and Cultural History*, Dublin, The Lilliput Press, pp.440-461 (p. 443). For this idea of Englishness and a kind of swaddled nostalgia, consider the 1924 speech by Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin which included references to, among other things, “The sound of the scythe against the whetstone”, “The corncrake on a dewy morning.”, “The wild anemones in the woods in April, the last load at night of hay being drawn down a lane as twilight comes on.” “The smell of wood smoke coming up in the Autumn evening.” See MacArthur, B. (ed.) (1999) *The Penguin Book of Twentieth Century Speeches*, London, Penguin, p. 94. See also Woods, M. (2005) *Rural Geography: Processes, Responses and Experiences in Rural Restructuring*, London, Sage, pp.279. Of course writers such as George Orwell articulated another side that expressed his England in the industrial “clatter of clogs” and “the to-and-fro of lorries on the Great North Road”. Orwell, G. (1946) ‘England Your England’ in Orwell, G. (1981) *A Collection of Essays*, London, Harvest, pp.252-279. See Cresswell, T. (1996) ‘The English Countryside’ in Cresswell, T., *In Place/ Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, pp.133-135. See also Berberich, C. (2006) ‘This Green and Pleasant Land: Cultural Constructions of Englishness’ in Burden, R. & Kohl, S. (eds.) *Landscape and Englishness*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, pp.207-225. With the benefit of these alternative experiences, Heaney could see flaws in Yeats’ landscapes. For him, there was something of reality missing in a pastoral, nostalgic romanticism. Cf. Cresswell (1996) p.133-34. See also Lowenthal, D. & Price, H. (1965) ‘English Landscape Tastes’, *Geographical Review*, 55 (2)

⁴⁶⁸ Lysaght (1997) op. cit. p.443.

For Heaney, the speech of the everyday is more akin to forming place than a special or formally elusive language that may be more typical of Yeats. Neither approach is right or wrong in terms of the abstract fact of landscape though in opinion and the developing proposition of a reality one can lean towards a particular approach. For example, though Heaney clearly expresses greater satisfaction for the colloquial approach of Kavanagh, the influence of Yeats comes to mind in the landscape of an Innisfree where imagination is collected with experience to stir literate responses beyond the visual.⁴⁶⁹

On the scale of colloquial rendition of landscape as opposed to the more universal idea of a broader national purpose, Heaney notes that “Kavanagh’s work touches the majority of Irish people more immediately and more intimately than most things in Yeats.”⁴⁷⁰ It is ironic that the more colloquial and local scale of Kavanagh is considered to appeal more universally than Yeats. In Heaney’s opinion this colloquial idea finds a sense of universality in Kavanagh’s “fidelity to the unpromising, unspectacular countryside of Monaghan and his rendering of the authentic speech of those parts gave the majority of Irish people, for whom the experience of life on the land was perhaps their most formative, an image of themselves that nourished their sense of themselves.”⁴⁷¹ In contrasting purposes different emphases are revealed so that different landscape realities are made. These realities have an underlying commonality in the sound of their sense and the feel of their words as propositions towards a place in which people sense something of themselves. As Frost, quoted by Buxton, claims “You can’t be universal without being colloquial, can you? It’s like trying to embrace the wind.”⁴⁷² It is in the communicated detail of the everyday that commonality and empathy may be found. Paradoxically the greater personal detail the greater sense of universality it may embody. In the process of coming to terms with rather than completely resolving such tension, landscape realities are produced and reproduced.

⁴⁶⁹ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘The Sense of Place’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.132).

⁴⁷⁰ *ibid* p.137.

⁴⁷¹ *ibid*. See Duffy, P. J. (1986) ‘Patrick Kavanagh’s Landscape’, in *Éire Ireland*, 21 (3), 105-18. See also Sheeran, P. (1994) ‘The Narrative Creation of Place: The Example of Yeats’ in Collins, T. (ed.) *Decoding The Landscape*, Galway, Centre For Landscape Studies, pp.149-165.

⁴⁷² Buxton, R. (2004) *Robert Frost and Northern Irish Poetry*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 49-50.

Landscaping in the colloquial vernacular is a personal experience for Kavanagh to the extent that Heaney claims his poem 'Kerr's Ass' uses names "as posts to fence out a personal landscape."⁴⁷³ By virtue of the sound of the poem, its sense and its language the fence is permeable and in the revelation of its permeability Kavanagh is universal by being colloquial. The posts that fence Kavanagh's personal landscape give something substantial and visible for the reader. Its privacy is given currency. The posts of Kavanagh's personal landscape are bones of self ready to be fleshed with the changing particularities of our own experience and circumstance. Like the old joke about the fence, Kavanagh's landscape is always running yet standing still. As colloquial relates to universal so sameness relates to difference.

The sound of language brings restorative change and renewal as people communicate their landscapes with each other in the embodiment of material land. Restoring a sense of the colloquial as Heaney did in 'Making Strange' restores a sense of sameness. After time spent at a loss unable to feel a sense of belonging to place, the speaker relates the difference he feels with the sameness of a known past and thus a new sense of place develops. For the poet the colloquial is made into a universality that reaches out to nourish his sense of self. In a place between sameness and difference and universal and colloquial the poet uncovers a sense of belonging.⁴⁷⁴ Difference is revealed by sameness and sameness is renewed by difference.

Kavanagh writes with a spirit of revelatory renewal in 'Advent'. "Through a chink too wide there comes in no wonder. /But here in the Advent-darkened room/Where the dry black bread and the sugarless tea/Of penance will charm back the luxury/Of a child's soul"⁴⁷⁵. These lines bear relevance to the predicament of Heaney in 'Making Strange'. Going away and gathering wide and varied experience has opened a wide chink of universality in which the minutiae of the local are lost. Coming back to a place once known so well but now darkened by strangeness, the poet is at a loss as to how to

⁴⁷³ Heaney, S. (1980) 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.141).

⁴⁷⁴ Heaney, S. (1984) 'Making Strange' in Heaney, S. *Station Island*, London, Faber & Faber, p.32; appendix p.285.

⁴⁷⁵ *ibid.*

render this place in a way he knows himself to have done in the past. Now an outsider he must come to terms with the tensions gathered in this place to restore the features that made him part of a place long ago. Finding a way in through wonder of the colloquial, his sense of self is made new again almost as a child's soul. The luxury of place can be found in the wandering bare activity of landscape. Place and Placelessness, to use the terminology of Relph, are different expressions of a landscape reality.⁴⁷⁶

Heaney found the same sense of novelty in restoration as Kavanagh expresses in 'Advent': "the newness that was in every stale thing/When we looked at it as children: the spirit-shocking/Wonder in a black slanting Ulster hill/Or the prophetic astonishment in the tedious talking/Of an old fool will awake for us and bring/You and me to the yard gate to watch the whins /And the bog-holes, cart-tracks, old stables where 'Time begins.'"⁴⁷⁷ Kavanagh's poem emphasizes a religious aspect that is concentrated on a spiritual Christian sense of re-awakening that appreciates such "wonders" as bog-holes, cart-tracks and whins. The poet comes to understand the Christian message which began in a stable "where time begins"⁴⁷⁸. The poem illustrates the role of landscape in this spiritual re-awakening. It is in the constant activity of landscape that old, stale realities are newly found. In their local making and remaking place is formed.

Antiquated tasks and chores like mowing with a scythe or digging for turf illuminate the landscape making. In the ongoing process and products of landscape there is meaning in the particularity of different ways. Though they may be quickly ignored in their simplicity or rusticity, their's is a significance that transcends the contemporaneity of their task. They astonish us into a deeper understanding of what landscape means, illustrating how each individual embodies landscape but does so in different ways. The knowledge of such experiences communicated to us in this case through poetry, but conceivably in any conversation, awakens us as to the universal abstract potential of landscape. In the actions of the everyday kinds of landscape are made. With the

⁴⁷⁶ Relph, E. (1976) *Place and Placelessness*, London, Pion.

⁴⁷⁷ Kavanagh, P. (1972) 'Advent' in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin Brian & O'Keefe Ltd. p.70; appendix, p. 295.

⁴⁷⁸ *ibid.*

commonality of its making all its ways are of significance. Having a sense of what landscape is helps reveal a sense of newness in how it is performed.

In Kavanagh's case, "after Christmas"⁴⁷⁹ and the new personal beginning it brings encourages him to anticipate renewal and recognize its effects in "the difference that sets an old phrase burning". He can see the wisdom in old phrases he had learnt but come to ignore. Like Heaney in 'Making Strange' the phrases and characteristics are given new life and significance. The landscapes within which such phrases are wrought are also given new life and renewed. They are transformed in their restoration. The detail and the revelatory potential of ordinariness will sustain him "in the streets where the village boys are lurching" and "among decent men too/Who barrow dung in gardens under trees". For Kavanagh there is belonging "wherever life pours ordinary plenty."⁴⁸⁰ The appreciation of ordinariness and the wealth of detail that makes itself known to him means there is no cause to "ask for reason's payment, /The why of heart-breaking strangeness in dreeping hedges/Nor analyse God's breath in common statement."⁴⁸¹ This appreciative acceptance conveys an openness and an identification with the flow of the everyday. Renewal and transformation is natural with living in the world. With awareness of the "January flower"⁴⁸² the cycle is begun again and renewal occurs naturally in a relationship of landscape expressed in the district of place.

Heaney writes how the need for a sense of place is not a uniquely Irish phenomenon though it may be more pronounced owing to the particularities of Irish history. Illustrating this he uses the example of Dante who he says

was very much a man of a particular place, that his great poem is full of intimate placings and place-names, and that as he moves round the murky circles of hell, often heard rather than seen by his damned friends and enemies, he is recognized by his local speech or so recognizes them.⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁰ *ibid.*

⁴⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁴⁸² *ibid.*

⁴⁸³ Heaney, S. (1980) 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.136-7).

Beyond this he also looks to the English literary tradition, citing examples “as diverse as Tennyson and Auden, Arnold and John Clare, Edward Thomas and Geoffrey Hill.”⁴⁸⁴ Landscape is a relationship of public and private. In their tension new reality is formed where there is some sense of identification. The sound of local expression can gain its currency with a universal identification. Finding identification in landscape and belonging in place is important to the individual and is translated through a fundamental need to make sense of surroundings by identifying oneself within them. Landscape articulation is recognition of self.

In the poem ‘Epic’⁴⁸⁵ Kavanagh opens as though he is about to tell us of an event worthy of great renown. “I have lived in important places, times/When great events were decided: who owned/That half a rood of rock, a no-man's land/Surrounded by our pitchfork-armed claims”⁴⁸⁶. The reality of landscape is made up of the language of stories and events. The “half a rood of rock” is given a particular texture and a particular sound. “I heard the Duffys shouting ‘Damn your soul’/And old McCabe, stripped to the waist, seen/Step the plot defying blue cast-steel / ‘Here is the march along these iron stones’.”⁴⁸⁷ Reciting the tale it seems that, as Heaney notes, “the very ordinariness of the quarrel between the Duffys and McCabes makes him again impatient of the whole blooming crowd of them.”⁴⁸⁸ There is a sense indeed that Kavanagh has seen all this in some shape or form a hundred times before. The same thing is happening but in different incarnations. The quarrel appears especially trivial yet somehow relevant when he notes: “That was the year of the Munich bother.” and asking “Which was more important?”⁴⁸⁹ Comparing them indicates commonality. Trivial though it seems the row over the square of rock is imbued with its own significance so that a world war is merely “bother”.

⁴⁸⁴ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘The Sense of Place’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p. 137).

⁴⁸⁵ Kavanagh, P. (1972) ‘Epic’ in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin, Brian & O’Keefe ltd. p.136; appendix, p. 296.

⁴⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁸ Heaney, S. (1980) ‘The Sense of Place’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p. 139).

⁴⁸⁹ Kavanagh, P. (1972) ‘Epic’ in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin, Brian & O’Keefe ltd. p.136; appendix p.296.

With this expression of “Munich bother” Kavanagh draws both events together so that universal meets colloquial in knowable language. With terms like ‘the troubles’ to describe terrible conflict there is sense in the sound of their rendering that evokes commonality and identification. Asking “which was more important?” is a question of scale and a difference of perception. To those fighting over the “half a rood of rock” their quarrel is just as important as any war. To the speaker the quarrel seems trivial. Contrasting renderings of events make different realities. To the speaker an event such as this is cause for exasperation and the opening lines seem more suited to another reality of great significance. Heaney writes that in ‘Epic’ “the local idiom extends beyond the locale itself. Munich, the European theatre, is translated into the local speech to become bother, and at once it is bother, it has become knowable”⁴⁹⁰ The realities of Munich are made from the stories and language of the local so that there are kinds of universal.⁴⁹¹ “The War” like “The Landscape” may be expressed in different ways and versions of the same thing.

Not yet realising that this is just another kind of universal, the speaker of ‘Epic’ was “inclined/To lose my faith in Ballyrush and Gortin/Till Homer's ghost came whispering to my mind./He said: I made the *Iliad* from such/A local row. Gods make their own importance.”⁴⁹² The same things are happening in different ways and the different ways make their own importance in the opinion of their reality. Heaney writes “Language, as well as gods, makes its own importance: the sense of place issues in a point of view, a phrase that Kavanagh set great store by and used always as a positive.”⁴⁹³ A sense of universality may be heard in the language of the colloquial. Approaching landscape with a particular sense for the detail of what Heaney calls “the ordinary, the actual, the known and the unimportant” issues forth in the particular sound of landscape realities rendered.⁴⁹⁴ The communicated particularities of

⁴⁹⁰Heaney, S. (1980) ‘The Sense of Place’ in Heaney, S. *Preoccupations*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.131-150 (p.139).

⁴⁹¹ Cf. Tomaney, J. (2010) ‘Parish and Universe: Patrick Kavanagh’s Poetics of the Local’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28, 311-325.

⁴⁹² Kavanagh, P. (1972) ‘Epic’ in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin, Brian & O’Keefe Ltd. p.136; appendix p.296.

⁴⁹³ Heaney, S. (1980) p.139.

⁴⁹⁴ *ibid.*

Kavanagh's, and conceivably the particularities of anyone's, approach to landscape and place gains currency in the revelatory possibilities for other's landscape realities.

7.2 The Loose Box

Heaney writes in 'Government of the Tongue' that "The poet is credited with a power to open unexpected and unedited communications between our nature and the nature of the reality we inhabit."⁴⁹⁵ The poet's work is communication and the significance of that communication is in the way it seems to summon us to an expression of reality and release us back in the consciousness of its imperfections.⁴⁹⁶ The making of landscape is informed by the communication of others' apparent realities. As the work of the poet is in the purpose and intent of poetry to communicate in this manner, poetry is a useful example of the way in which realities are formed in its measurement and conformity to an art. The poem is a text as the landscape is a text. There is substance in both as there is fluidity. The tradition of poetry and what constitutes poetry illustrates in a recordable fashion the activity of landscape and the status of landscape as something of a product of tensions and synthesis. The poem forms a clarified landscape reality out of a landscape process and in communication, restores it and renews realities through the circumstance and experience of living life. Quoting Frost's essay 'The Figure a Poem Makes', Heaney discusses an idea of what the true poem is to which idea all poetry is a proposition.

'Read it a hundred times,' he says of the true poem. 'It can never lose its sense of a meaning that once unfolded by surprise as it went.' 'It begins in delight, it inclines to the impulse, it assumes direction with the first line laid down, it runs a course of lucky events and ends in a clarification of life – not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion.'⁴⁹⁷

Finding reality in landscape or a sense of belonging in place is a momentary stay against confusion. To be anything beyond momentary is the fact in an infinity of

⁴⁹⁵ Heaney, S. (1988) 'The Government of the Tongue', in Heaney, S. *The Government of the Tongue: The 1986 T.S. Eliot Memorial Lectures and Other Critical Writings*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.91-109 (p. 93).

⁴⁹⁶ *ibid.* p.108.

⁴⁹⁷ *ibid.* p. 93. Cf. Ralph Waldo Emerson on Virgil: "Well that author is a thousand books to a thousand persons", Emerson, R.W. (1908) *Essays: First and Second Series*, London, J.M. Dent & Co., p.193.

dreams.⁴⁹⁸ In the course of discovering landscape as with a poem, one is stirred to impulse and direction. In the beginning it is observed. By running a course of events it environs and finally it clarifies in articulation. The momentary reality of the articulated landscape in everyday living immediately gets away from us as soon as it is made. In the resulting re-emerging distance there is a return to observation to find a sense of meaning that renews and reclarifies. In the action of landscape and poetry, of reading once again or a hundred times, the way truth is clarified by its kinds is manifest in the differences among an essential sense.

Expanding on this essential sense, Heaney refers to Kavanagh in 'The Loose Box', a poem from his *Electric Light* collection. For Heaney the truth of landscape is given its sense by an old recording of Kavanagh talking about the ordinariness of land. Tellingly, it is not a poem of Kavanagh's Heaney refers to but a recording in which sense is given its particular sound in Kavanagh's colloquial speech. The actuality and sameness of the soil and the land is a repository through which words and ways of rendering it are translated and given currency. Human and land thrive beyond themselves in the communicative collective of a landscape relationship.

On an old recording Patrick Kavanagh states
That there's health and worth in any talk about
The properties of land. Sandy, glarry,
Mossy, heavy, cold, the actual soil
Almost doesn't matter; the main thing is
An inner restitution, a purchase come by
By pacing it in words that make you feel
You've found your feet in what 'surefooted' means
And in the ground of your own understanding—
Like Heracles stepping in and standing under
Atlas's sky-lintel, as earthed and heady
As I am when I talk about the loose box.⁴⁹⁹

"An inner restitution" and an identification of the self are found in the making of landscape. Clarification is found "in words that make you feel/You've found your feet

⁴⁹⁸ Consider Frost, R. (1986) 'Mowing' in *Collected Poems of Robert Frost*, New York, Buccaneer Books, p.25: "The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows." appendix p.277.

⁴⁹⁹ Heaney, S. (2001) 'The Loose Box' in Heaney, S. *Electric Light*, New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, p.16; appendix, p.287. The old recording of Kavanagh to which Heaney refers is *Almost Everything*, Kavanagh, P. (1963) *Almost Everything* [vinyl] Dublin, Claddagh Records.

in what 'surefooted' means/And in the ground of your own understanding." Finding a secure grounding on the shifting foundations of everyday living is a continual cycle of observation, interpretation and articulation. Words of rendering like "Sandy, glarry, /Mossy, heavy, cold" are steps in landscape and the reverberations of their sound over time make place. Identifying with the particular sound of a sense as we make our landscape realities brings us closer to a sense of place.

'The Loose Box' is an apt title to illustrate the idea of landscape. It is a paradox itself that combines the fixed boundaries of a box with the free movement in permeability. In this poem Heaney combines ideas of the universal and the colloquial as well as rootedness and movement. Offsetting the earthy colloquial terms that constitute "The properties of land" with the universal "standing under Atlas's sky-lintel", landscape is the expression of the loose box. It thrives on the earthedness of continuity and the headiness of change in equal measure. For the poet in 'The Loose Box', this phenomenon is nestled in words and the melding of local, colloquial traditions and more formal and literary traditions. By such paradoxical means is landscape made and the continual defiance of resolution in paradox sees it continually remade in the inner revelation of its details.

In and of itself, a loose box may be described as a type of manger for hay, a hay rack or a hay box.⁵⁰⁰ Ordinary work and activity are what makes Heaney's landscapes and this is illustrated in 'The Loose Box'. It is common activity but the differences in its rendering form particular landscape reality. It is in the communication of commonness that difference may thrive. Writing in his poem 'Casting and Gathering', dedicated to Ted Hughes, Heaney comments how "one man casts, the other gathers/And then *vice versa*."⁵⁰¹ Ideas are cast out and gathered in by the direct communication of two imaginations. It may be noticed that the poet refers to himself directly involved in the

⁵⁰⁰ Hay and landscaping the hayfield are common features in poetry. Ted Hughes, a contemporary of Heaney's, has written several poems including 'Hay' and 'Last Load'. See Hughes, T. Keegan, P. (ed.) (2003) *Ted Hughes: Collected Poems*, London, Faber & Faber. See also Heaney, S. (1972) 'Fodder' in Heaney, S. *Wintering Out*, London, Faber & Faber, p.13.

⁵⁰¹ Heaney, S. (1991) 'Casting and Gathering' in Heaney, S. (1991) *Seeing Things*, London, Faber & Faber, p.13. See also Ingelbien, R. (1999) 'Mapping the Misreadings: Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, and Nationhood', *Contemporary Literature*, 40 (4), 627-658.

action of work. In 'Digging', he referred to 'I' but he spoke of himself digging with a pen, struggling with a tradition that was defined by the tangibility and immediate actuality of working the land. In 'Man and Boy' the poet referred to 'I' as an observing child. In 'The Loose Box' there is something different: he is a direct articulator. He can speak from the ground of his own understanding and recall events and experiences in the dialect of his own language.

Such an approach in the context of 'Digging' would have the poet's father writing with his spade rather than the poet digging with his pen. The sound of sense is different as tradition and modernity relate in a different way. There is a direct relationship between Kavanagh's belief in the "health and worth in any talk about/The properties of land." The landscapes formed "earthed and heady/As I am when I talk about the loose box" find a direct sense of validation and a confidence in the immediacy of a community. There is a heady realisation of possibility and potential in the ordinary earth.

In his essay on Robert Frost 'Filling the Cup Above the Brim', Heaney writes of his evolution from 'Digging' to his volume *Electric Lights*. Quoting a passage of Frost's 'To Earthward', he considers that in addition to a push downwards into the earth and into the layers of bog there is also a paradoxical force upwards. "In spite of the physical push to earthward, the psychic direction is skyward."⁵⁰² This is yet another aspect of the tensions that form landscape. Landscape happens between earth and sky, in the push downward for restoration and the drag upward to transformation. In this respect the poem is a true expression of landscape, a box of permeable boundaries. Collected tensions and paradoxes are necessary to allow a path for intervention and its expression. The nativity scene the poet witnesses in 'The Loose Box' doesn't inspire or reveal. There is no sense of movement to meet with the life unyielding "*rigor vitae*" or "nothing but gloss and chill", "The solid stooping shepherds" or "the stiff-legged donkey" and how "Each figure in the winter crib was well/And truly placed." There was no sense of permeability in the nativity scene leading the poet to note with disappointment "no

⁵⁰² Heaney, S. (2003) 'Above the Brim' in Bloom, H. (ed.) *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Robert Frost*, Philadelphia, Chelsea House, pp. 201-219 (p.214).

fodder-billowed armfuls spilling over ...” Permeability is found for the speaker through communication with the poet and novelist Thomas Hardy who opened up a reality of the nativity in such a way “That magnified my soul.” ‘The Loose Box’ illustrates the growth of the mind and the rendering of changing realities through communication.

Stable child, grown stabler when I read
 In adolescence Thomas *dolens* Hardy—
 Not, oddly enough, his Christmas Eve night-piece
 About the oxen in their bedded stall,
 But the threshing scene in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*—
 That magnified my soul. Raving machinery,
 The thresher bucking sky, rut-shuddery,
 A headless Trojan horse expelling straw
 From where the head should be, the underjaws
 Like staircases set champing—it hummed and slugged
 While the big sag and slew of the canvas belt
 That would cut your head off if you didn't watch
 Flowed from the flywheel. And comes flowing back,
 The whole mote-sweaty havoc and mania
 Of threshing day, the feeders up on top
 Like pyre-high Aztec priests gutting forked sheaves
 And paying them ungirded to the drum.

Slack of gulped straw, the belly-taut of seedbags.
 And in the stilly night, chaff piled in ridges,
 Earth raw where the four wheels rocked and battled.⁵⁰³

Beneath the surface invisible sameness threads together visible difference through a layer of understanding that runs beneath the surface. Nativity is connected with Hardy's threshing scene in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* rather than the more typical “Christmas Eve night-piece”. The connection is noted by the poet himself as odd especially given the obvious parallel between nativity and Christmas night-piece. It's almost as though the link was formed in a way the poet can't quite explain, illustrating “an underworld of understanding” that brings us to an incident involving a young Michael Collins.

Of Michael Collins the poet writes of his boy-deeds in similar circumstances, a story “told of Collins and retold/By his biographer” where he fell “through the bedded mouth of the loft trapdoor.” This is juxtaposed against him being “ambushed at Béal

⁵⁰³ Heaney, S. (2001) ‘The Loose Box’ in Heaney, S. *Electric Light*, New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, p.16; appendix, p.287.

Na Bláth". The incident is recalled with new significance, its details recreated in new language with talk of an ominous sense of "the aftermath...", "the hidden jaws of that hay crevasse" and "pollen scarves". An underlying sameness is found that brings about restoration and in turn transforms into a sense of reality. The words of the story's telling are etched with a new sense of reality in the hindsight of subsequent events.

One of his boy-deeds
Was to enter the hidden jaws of that hay crevasse
And get to his feet again and come unscathed
Through a dazzle of pollen scarves to breathe the air.
True or not true, the fall within his fall,
That drop through the flower-floor lets him find his feet
In an underworld of understanding
Better than any newsreel lying-in-state
Or footage of the laden gun-carriage
And grim cortege could ever manage to.

Or so it can be stated
In the must and drift of talk about the loose box.⁵⁰⁴

There is no mastery as the revelation of the story gives a permeability that a chill newsreel gives a further dimension of reality. At this though there is no certainty and the poet follows up in the final couplet with the intonation of "Or so it *can* be stated" rather than "Or so it *is* stated." There is no certainty visible in the unpredictable potential of the everyday. "In the must and drift of talk about the loose box" there is hope for permeability of access to restoration and transformation of events that cast hayseeds in the air so that we may be transformed by how they fall. This is a hope for landscape that tensions may never be absolutely reconciled but that we may have a point of intervention in relating them to each other in different ways in the infinity of potential and the appearance of reality.

As landscape and place are made so the reality and the poem is made in the drift and talk of the loose box. There is permeability to other realities through which we can intervene by an underlying sameness that is given visibility through the difference of the individual. This is aptly rendered in Rotella's review of Heaney's 'Electric Light' claiming that:

⁵⁰⁴ *ibid.*

Eminent poets accumulate debt they discharge by acknowledgement. Seamus Heaney's "earthed and heady" new collection acknowledges a shoal of poets, among them Kavanagh and Yeats, Shakespeare and Hardy, Virgil and Dante, Hugh MacDiarmid and Dylan Thomas, Robert Frost and Elizabeth Bishop, Zbigniew Herbert and Joseph Brodsky.⁵⁰⁵

The scope of Heaney's poetic education and the breadth of his influences are immense and defy the visibility of this study. This is so because the concentration is on the interpretation of landscape in poetry. As a result poetry is illustrative of something beyond itself in landscape. Thus the selection of Heaney and a conservative but by no means exclusive selection of some of his influences are designed to elaborate the form and manner of landscape as abstract and action. These examples literalise the conceit of this section in particular poetry sitting at the centre of a vast and ever-growing landscape family tree. This approach demonstrates a landscape that fits into a continuum beyond the frame of historical tradition. Landscape is much more than a tradition; it is formation and generation, restoration and transformation. Poetry and the way in which it is often rendered in such a way as to be of and by landscape is a great boon for exploration of a landscape idea and a salient actionable interpretation of a theory of landscape. The poem helps to reduce the vastness of sky to a manageable step from which we can watch all things grow out from the small space on which we stand.⁵⁰⁶ The loose box is something distinctive in and of itself. The loose box is a unity of apparently contradictory characteristics articulated by its own distinctive name.

7.3 Classical Illumination

As a means of illustrating revelation and transformation of landscape in circularity rather than linearity, it is worth considering classical influences in the development of Heaney's articulated voice. As a landscape reality is written and rewritten in stories and events, so too is the voice we use to express those realities changed in the details of

⁵⁰⁵ Rotella, G. (2001) 'Poetry Itself', *The Senanee Review*, 109(4), pp.72-74 This introduction takes the catalogue of influences laid out in Heaney, S. (2001) 'The Bookcase' in *Electric Light*, New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, pp.60-61.

⁵⁰⁶ Cf. John MacGahern (2002) *That They May Face the Rising Sun*, London, Faber & Faber: 'What are you looking at, lad?' 'At how the rafters frame the sky. How the squares of light are more interesting than the open sky. They make it look more human by reducing the sky, and then the whole sky grows out from that small space.' p.72.

language. Considering a classical influence in this later stage of the section underlines how realities change. Up until now, consideration has been given to relatively contemporary poets in Heaney, Frost and Kavanagh. Unconcealing a classical dimension serves to illuminate a different sense of poetry and its landscape reality through the transformative restoration of inner detail.

In the *Loose Box* Heaney illustrates the ground of his own understanding by referring to “Heracles stepping in and standing under/Atlas’s sky-lintel”. The story of Heracles and Atlas details how Heracles was sent as one of his twelve labours to fetch some apples from the goddess Hera’s garden that was tended by Atlas’ daughters, the Hesperides and guarded by the dragon Ladon. Heracles went to Atlas and offered to hold up the heavens while Atlas got the apples from his daughters.

Upon his return with the apples, however, Atlas attempted to trick Heracles into carrying the sky permanently by offering to deliver the apples himself. Heracles, suspecting Atlas did not intend to return, pretended to agree to Atlas’ offer, asking only that Atlas take the sky again for a few minutes so Heracles could rearrange his cloak as padding on his shoulders. When Atlas set down the apples and took the heavens upon his shoulders again, Heracles took the apples and escaped.⁵⁰⁷

Drawing on this example, Heaney illustrates a process that involves stepping in to hold up a tradition but also engineering a way to escape that tradition. In the relationship of landscape as individual and the detail in the ordinariness of land this escape is effected through combining colloquial and universal in a way that makes popularity out of privacy. Like Heracles, Heaney adjusts his cloak of verbiage for comfort, thereby achieving a sense of accomplishment in forging the fruits of tradition to new purpose in a continuous change. In some versions of the myth, the pillars of Heracles liberate Atlas. As a metaphor this illustrates the liberation of tradition by restoration and transformation.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁷ See for example Price, S & Kearns, E. (eds.) (2003) *The Oxford Classical Dictionary of Myth and Religion*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.69ff.

⁵⁰⁸ See Davis, W. (2007) ‘From Mossbawn to Meliboeus: Seamus Heaney’s Ambivalent Pastoralism’, *Southwest Review*, 92 (1), 100-115.

The tradition of the pastoral eclogue is one that illustrates restoration and transformation. Inherited from a long tradition, Heaney explores the possibilities of the form. *The Eclogues* are pastoral poems written about a beautiful land, usually assumed to be Arcadia. They are often written in the form of a dialogue between shepherds. Written in a tradition developed earlier by Theocritus, Virgil employed the Theocritan example to great effect in his *Eclogues* by offering a dramatic and mythic interpretation of revolutionary change at Rome in a turbulent period between roughly 44 and 38 BC. Virgil introduced a political element that was largely absent from Theocritus' poems. Reaching into the tradition of the *Eclogues*, Heaney restores a tradition and transforms a landscape, visiting the rural, pastoral setting of Virgil and influenced by its example crafts his own *Eclogues*.⁵⁰⁹

The landscape consciousness illustrated in the 'Bann Valley Eclogue' of Heaney is supported by delving back into such traditions, giving them renewed significance in the context of a renewed landscape.⁵¹⁰ Throughout the poem the speaker is in discussion with the Latin poet Virgil. He beseeches him for inspiration. The landscape of the Bann Valley is transformed in the illumination of the Virgilian example. It is a translation of one reality into another so that something new is made in the relationship. The reality of a Bann Valley landscape is formed of a reality all its own from influences that run beneath its surface through a confluence of styles. Virgil's Sicilian Muses sing to Heaney, the potential of a new landscape on their breath. Heaney's epitaph at the beginning of 'Bann Valley Eclogue' illustrates this. "*Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus—Sicilian Muses let us sing greater things—Virgil, Eclogue 4.*"⁵¹¹ The child of a song sung and heard is a different reality for the Bann Valley.

Poet: Bann Valley Muses, give us a song worth singing,
 Something that rises like the curtain in
 Those words *And it came to pass* or *In the beginning*.
 Help me to please my hedge-schoolmaster Virgil

⁵⁰⁹ See Virgil, Lee, G. (trans.) (1984) *The Eclogues*, Harmondsworth, Penguin. On the tradition of the eclogue see Alpers, P. (1979) *The Singer of the Eclogues: A Study of Virgilian Pastoral*, Berkeley, University of California Press. See also Twiddy, I. (2006) 'Seamus Heaney's Versions of Pastoral', *Essays in Criticism*, 56(1), 50-71.

⁵¹⁰ Heaney, S. (2001) 'Bann Valley Eclogue' in Heaney, S. *Electric Light*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, pp.235-236; appendix, p. 289.

⁵¹¹ Virgil, *Eclogues* (4.1).

And the child that's due. Maybe, heavens, sing
Better times for her and her generation.⁵¹²

The example of Virgil and the words he imparts illuminate the Bann Valley by raising a curtain to a potential as yet unseen. The poet makes an invocation to Virgil for a way to render the Bann Valley in a new beginning that will bring about a new landscape. In essence it is a search for a different language to rest upon the same features. It is an eye observing for revelation in the thingness of things whereof one could not speak before in the silent absence of a language.⁵¹³ To this invocation Virgil replies:

Virgil: Here are my words you'll have to find a place for:
Carmen, ordo, nascitur, saeculum, gens.
Their gist in your tongue and province should be clear
Even at this stage. Poetry, order, the times,
The nation, wrong and renewal, then an infant birth
And a flooding away of all the old miasma.

Whatever stains you, you rubbed it into yourselves:
Earth mark, birth mark, mould like the bloodied mould
On Romulus's ditch-back. But when the waters break
Banns stream will overflow, the old markings
Will avail no more to keep east bank from west.
The valley will be washed like the new baby.⁵¹⁴

Virgil passes on his words to the poet. If he is to shape his landscape with an ear to Virgil, then he shall have to use words that talk of song, order and rebirth. Virgil's message is renewal "And a flooding away of all the old miasma." The knowledge of such a language has the power to rid the pollution of old realities. When the river runs beyond the confines of its banks and reaches into new places, "the old markings will avail no more to keep east bank from west. The valley will be washed like a new baby." There is new landscape crafted in the knowledge of time and experience and the example of new language. The sound of sense in Virgil's message illustrates how the universal becomes colloquial. The reality of the river and its valley is based not on separation but on connection. The message of a Latin poet is made relevant in the Bann Valley. Its relevance realised has the potential to make new landscape. The poet tries to

⁵¹² Heaney, S. (2001) 'Bann Valley Eclogue' op. cit.

⁵¹³ Wittgenstein, L. (1949) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, "Whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent." (7).

⁵¹⁴ Heaney, S. (2001) 'Bann Valley Eclogue' op. cit.

articulate this new landscape in a reconciliation of political tensions. The Virgilian vision of a world at peace is envisaged in the making of landscape. Struggling at first to see it, its outlines are finally apparent so that Virgil's words are not empty air above the Bann valley but become the very fabric of its known reality:

Poet: *Pacatum orbem*: your words are too much nearly.
Even "orb" by itself. What on earth could match it?
And then, last month, at noon-eclipse, wind dropped.
A millennial chill, birdless and dark, prepared.
A firstness steadied, a lastness, a born awareness
As name dawned into knowledge: I saw the orb.⁵¹⁵

This new landscape will be prompted by new sounds. It will not be frozen in the darkness of a soundless eclipse and held fast by intractable positions. Landscape realities are formed in communicated connections made not in strife or war but in peace, growth and nourishment. It will grow in the light of summer sun and the industrious rhythmic sounds of the milking parlour as divisions are healed in permeability:

Virgil: Eclipses won't be for this child. The cool she'll know
Will be the pram hood over her vestal head.
Big dog daisies will get fanked up in the spokes.
She'll lie on summer evenings listening to
A chug and slug going on in the milking parlour.
Let her never hear close gunfire or explosions.⁵¹⁶

In the illumination Virgil brings, memories are stirred and landscapes of the past are vividly rendered. They are brought into new light with the significance of an acquired Virgilian vision. The collected movement of influence among people and nature intertwine in the same way as "Big dog daisies will get fanked up in the spokes" of the pram. Subsuming this influence into an invisible underworld of knowing, the poet wonders at the memory of the railway on St. Patrick's mornings as he continues to render it in bucolic pastoral that echoes Virgil. The poet is at ease with the Virgilian

⁵¹⁵ *ibid.*

⁵¹⁶ *ibid.*

vision, his memory and landscape is illuminated by a nurturing influence. The circle of a landscape and the places it forms continues to turn in change.

Poet: Why do I remember St. Patrick's mornings,
Being sent by my mother to the railway line
For the little trefoil, untouchable almost, the shamrock
With its twining, binding, creepery, tough, thin roots
All over the place, in the stones between the sleepers.
Dew-scales shook off the leaves. Tear-ducts asperging.

Child on the way, it won't be long until
You land among us. Your mother's showing signs,
Out for her sunset walk among big round bales.
Planet earth like a teething ring suspended
Hangs by its world-chain. Your pram waits in the corner.
Cows are let out. They're sluicing the milk-house floor.⁵¹⁷

The child is offered by the poet as a symbol of hope. She is the manifestation of a new reality. The words and deeds of peace, hope, growth and nurturing will see a cycle evolve over time and experience that sees language move to thought and around again to language and the landscape written in phrase and name. This is a feature of dialogue. The example of Virgil's *Eclogues* ably illustrates the restorative and transformative power of dialogue and communication that alters the appearance of landscapes in hitherto unrealised ways.

Related in their approaches in the making of landscape, Frost too was influenced by the Virgilian example. For instance in *Mending Wall* there is the dialogue between neighbours which recalls the structure of the Virgilian eclogue. Buxton writes of Frost's use of Virgil that: "Frost often drew upon classical literature in his poetry, usually as a means of enlarging the implications of his work, and his use of Virgil in this manner is generally well received."⁵¹⁸ The example of Virgil as a political writer lends a new shape to the land. The implications of building and repairing a wall are thus given wider significance. Understanding the influence of Virgil on Heaney and Frost illustrates another dimension to the landscapes articulated in their poetry. In the articulation of landscape and in the communication of traditions landscapes are restored and

⁵¹⁷ *ibid.*

⁵¹⁸ Buxton, R. (2004) *Robert Frost and Northern Irish Poetry*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.54.

transformed. The pokey field and the apparent insignificance of the everyday are illuminated in the currency of enlarged implications and their potential in new language and thought.

In the Bann Valley of Heaney, universal is blended in colloquial. The “shamrock/With its twining, binding, creepery, tough, thin roots /All over the place” draws subject and object, nature and culture, public and private and universal and colloquial into a synthesis of potential expression. In such ways do landscapes make places. Life and work have their say in the loose box of place. In his Nobel speech, Heaney recalls his compatriot Yeats standing in the same spot many years before where “He came to Sweden to tell the world that the local work of poets and dramatists had been as important to the transformation of his native place and times as the ambushes of guerilla armies.”⁵¹⁹ In the course of shaping land everything is as important as everything else. All events and actions have their importance in place and as they are revealed to us in the making of landscape, our sense of place goes deeper with every revelation - as Kavanagh heard in the message of Homer, “Gods make their own importance.”⁵²⁰ Much like a ticking clock a landscape reality is the sound emanating from processes behind its face. As times change the clock keeps ticking. Its importance is registered in how we hear it if we hear it at all.

⁵¹⁹ Heaney, S. (1996) ‘Crediting Poetry: The 1995 Nobel Lecture’, *World Literature Today*, Vol. 70(2), 253-259 (p.258).

⁵²⁰ Kavanagh, P. (1972) ‘Epic’ in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin, Brian & O’Keefe ltd. p.136; appendix p.296.

Conclusion

You had to come back
To learn how to lose yourself,
To be pilot and stray – witch,
Hansel and Gretel in one.
- Seamus Heaney - 'The Plantation'⁵²¹

As Kavanagh writes in his poem *Innocence* "They said /That I was bounded by the whitethorn hedges/Of the little farm and did not know the world. /But I knew that love's doorway to life/Is the same doorway everywhere."⁵²² In the sameness of things a point of access is opened for the intervention of difference. Landscape realities are formed in relationships and are outward expressions of how tension and paradox relate, for example in subject and object, nature and culture, private and public or universal and colloquial, continuity and change, movement and fixity and human and land. These things are never completely unified but they relate in a collective of landscape. How landscape realities are expressed is an embodiment of this relationship and an expression of the particularity of its status. The action of landscape is renewable through circumstances social, political, cultural and economic enmeshed in time, space and the experience of living.

In the course of everyday living landscape is a process that moves through observation and interpretation to be articulated in an intimacy of communication that explains in a known language the reality of a relationship between human and land. In the continual embodiment of the landscape phenomenon, senses of place or placelessness may be formed. These are particular concentrations of landscape in the context of locality and district. Such a context forms the particularity of status in a landscape relationship. Behind the action of landscape is an abstract sense of sameness. The sound of sense, as Frost would call it⁵²³, in this sameness is a point of fixity to which we can relate the difference of our own individuality. This section is designed to interpret this activity through the example of poetry and the shared connections based on a sense of sameness but expressed in a sense of difference. Finding a voice to

⁵²¹ Heaney, S. (1969) 'The Plantation' in Heaney, S. *Door into the Dark*, London, Faber, p.50.

⁵²² Kavanagh, P. (1972) 'Innocence' in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin, Brian & O'Keefe ltd. p.127; appendix p.296.

⁵²³ See pp.166-167 n.380.

articulate our sense of reality is a process that brings further from and closer to the clarity of a proposition.

Interpreting an idea of landscape in poetry brings a sense of visibility to its action. Reading and interpreting the poem as a visible landscape reality it is possible to see the communicative and circumstantial processes that go into its making. The reality of the poem is not an end product but rather a visible centre through which processes of its formation move. By the example of Heaney's poetry there is poetry that exhibits a visible landscape product in the sense that the poem is written by landscape as process. The communication of its reality and an underlying sameness in abstraction blends universal and colloquial into popularity so that there is a continual restoration and transformation rendering the poem as landscape reality malleable and fluid when it is unconcealed by a reader. Each approach to the reality of the poem is a kind of universality and a particular way of understanding and explaining reality that translates into the different realities of those to whom the poem is made known.

Interpreting this transferral of knowledge or wisdom, consideration was given in the main to the poetry of Wordsworth, Frost, Yeats, Kavanagh and the Latin poet Virgil. By the virtue of Heaney's typical self-effacement he allows us into his poetic community and tells us about his relationship to these poets. These poets, as examples ostensibly expressive of landscape reality and place considered in a motive to elucidate a sense of the form and manner in landscape, are influential in the way Heaney articulates the particularity of his own landscape realities. How Heaney relates to and communicates with the presence and knowledge of these poets' work forms his unique kind of landscape that communicates a sense of sameness with a sense of difference, a sense of universal with a sense of colloquial, a sense of continuity with a sense of change and a sense of the individual with a sense of the community. The friction created in the distance between these is an ongoing process of landscape making, reaching the point of expression in a product that fills the gap as it were. The products that find their expression emerge from an extensive family tree, where new realities are distilled from old ones. As a demonstration of these linkages, the reality of poetry like 'Digging' and 'Man and Boy' is influenced in its appearance from Frost's 'Mowing' as

Frost's 'Mowing' is in turn given new illumination by Heaney's poem. In the same way landscapes are formed in restoration of detail and transformation of sense.

In the final part of chapter seven considering classical illuminations, the cycle of restoration and transformation is begun again as the poetry of Heaney and Kavanagh in particular are given new meaning in the light of a classical context. Broadly, classical motifs inspired mainly by Homer and Virgil inform or influence to a greater or lesser degree all the poets considered in this chapter. In keeping Virgil for a final consideration, a rereading of the section may yield different senses of its realities. In this respect this section, based on interpretive action, is designed to be interpreted by those who read it, drawing on the examples set out and translating them into their own individual outlook and the realities of their own landscapes. Rather than a focus on the biographical details of particular poets or particular lands and places, the biographical focus is on the relationship between them in landscape. The reality of the poem is itself a biography of landscape. In this there is a sense of sameness with the remit of Said's work on the novelist Joseph Conrad that focuses not on Conrad or Conrad's books but Conrad's consciousness.⁵²⁴

In the first part of this work, entitled 'Observations' a workable concept of landscape was developed. As a means of testing the theory of the concept, it has been distilled through neither human nor land but the unity of both in the poem. This is done in order to illustrate the importance of words and language through communication, transmission and translation and ultimately the role of language in the transference of landscape knowledge.⁵²⁵ Landscapes are restored and transformed by what is said and unsaid in words. Oftentimes it is in brevity that most is conveyed. For example Heaney's aphorism "whatever you say, say nothing" can say a great deal.⁵²⁶ Landscape transcends categories by drawing on the revelations of the narrowest minutiae and it is these that knit together tensions in the emergence of renewal and its subsequent

⁵²⁴ Said, E. (1966) *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

⁵²⁵ See Lorimer, H. (2003) 'Telling Small Stories: Spaces of Knowledge and The Practice of Geography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 28(2), pp.197-217, (p.208-210)

⁵²⁶ Heaney, S. (1975) 'Whatever You Say, Say Nothing' in Heaney, S. *North*, London, Faber & Faber, pp.57-60.

unravelling in yet new revelation. Landscape can't be universal without being colloquial as it can't be different without being the same.

If the poem is after Heaney, a 'loose box', then it illuminates landscape and the places of its action. The walls of place are permeable to the action of landscape and the accretion of realities. In the continuous present of landscape, tensions are drawn together and in a confluence of self, there is restoration and transformation. With the embodiment of the individual landscape is an expression of self and its reality is an explanation of self. Landscape is not just a detached container in which things happen, rather it is an action to "take upon us the mystery of things".⁵²⁷ The use of poetry is an interpretive example of the everyday individual in living. By interpreting the visibility of a landscape idea in poetry, the sky is reduced and from the small space that is often place, it grows again. Progressing from the visibility and sound of sense formed through an interpretative reading and how a general idea might manifest in practice, the thesis transforms this into a particular articulation, offering up a way of living in a landscape relationship.

The idea of landscape that is text is a helpful approach to teasing out a general sense of what landscape is. Interpreting the text helps to make more of an observable form. The form is a representation. This section has been about interpreting that form indirectly, reading into how it might be performed in the appearance of a phenomenological reality. In a thesis based on landscape as relationship and communication as fulfilling the network of that relationship, an example in poetry has been particularly useful in demonstrating the ways in which language may be wielded in the making of that relationship. An interpretive reading such as this is an indirect approach to seeing how the form might be attempted at. The first part was about observing a representation. This second part has been about interpreting its performance. This leads on to a final part that is a direct and particular performance of a representational form. The interpretation is a mediating connection between observation and the direct, autobiographical approach of first person articulation.

⁵²⁷ Shakespeare, W., Foakes, R.A. (ed.) (1997) *King Lear*, London, Thomson Learning, Act V Scene III.

This approach is related to a biographical turn in landscape writing that intertwines living experience and knowledge with land.⁵²⁸ This thesis and its development, is designed to relate experience and cultivate knowledge through a relationship with land. The culmination of this is in the third and final part. In many ways it is a direct critical and creative engagement with the first and second part, drawing together general and particular into the expressive unit of personal memory and reflection that is closely related to an idea of geographical historiography.⁵²⁹ This thesis progresses now to autobiography or geobiography even⁵³⁰, distilled through an observed and interpreted landscape expression.

The particularity of this expression means that it can be renewed and transformed with new experience and memory. The general representation takes on a new appearance with every distinct and particular rendering. Relating the general to the particular and acknowledging that the particular performance or action of landscape is an attempted rendition of an essential form, is a way of enlivening a geographical engagement that might otherwise reach a critical and creative dead end without the juxtaposition of discursive theory and performative action. The violence of that juxtaposition is mediated in this thesis by this second transitional, interpretive part. In this thesis, where interpretation may be considered biographical, articulation may be considered autobiographical and taking ownership of the interpretation.

⁵²⁸ E.g. Lorimer, H. (2006) 'Herding Memories of Humans and Animals', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24, 497-518; Lorimer, H. (2003) 'Telling Small Stories: Spaces of Knowledge and the Practice of Geography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 28(2), pp. 197-217. See for example Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, p. 208ff.

⁵²⁹ Lorimer, H. (2003) 'The Geographical Field Course as Active Archive', *Cultural Geographies*, 10, 278-308.

⁵³⁰ See Anderson, B. (2006) 'Travel and Traffic: On the Geo- Biography of *Imagined Communities*' in *Imagined Communities*, London, Verso, pp. 211-237.

Part Three: Articulations

What if I bade you leave
The cavern of the mind?
There's better exercise
In the sunlight and wind.
- W.B. Yeats - 'Those Images'.⁵³¹

Labour with what zeal we will, something still remains undone.
-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow – 'Something Left Undone'.⁵³²

Introduction

The previous sections have explicitly developed a sense of landscape and an idea as to how landscape is rendered in abstract and practice. Part of this is the idea of visibility and invisibility. The visible landscape is action and performance of the everyday. In the context of its performance there is no right or wrong way of partaking in landscapes. As a result all its manifestations may be considered propositions and attempts. As propositions and attempts, they must be carried out towards something and the something is an abstract. This is a solid and stable idea of what landscape is and through its substance the action of landscape moves in how it is carried out. It is in a sense of sameness under a surface of difference that landscape can be recognised in all its manifestations. Fundamentally, landscape is about the same thing happening in different ways. Its different ways are due to the tensions collected in an idea of landscape as a relationship, the abstract can be inferred or distilled through the everyday realities of its happening.

Among the most pertinent of these tensions are those between subject and object, nature and culture, flux and stability, individual and community all derived from a tension between human and land. Given that these tensions never entirely reconcile but are always communicating, their expression is a status of their relationship and this expression is an expression of a landscape reality. The realities expressed in poetry are manifestations of this relationship and by the example of the previous section they are realities that often bear a more than superficial relationship to the physical features in

⁵³¹ Yeats, W.B. 'Those Images' in Finneran, R.J. (ed.) (1989) *Collected Poems*, New York, Collier Books, p.319.

⁵³² Longfellow, H.W. (1993) 'Something Left Undone' in *The Complete Poetical Works of Henry Wordsworth Longfellow*, New York, Buccaneer Books, p.203.

fields, gardens, trees and places. They are ways of landscaping that restore the substance of past and transform it into future. The realities of landscape express a relationship that is formative of self so that neither human nor land really matter but the status of the landscape relationship of which both are a part negotiating the tensions of their collective living.

Vladimir Nabokov in his lecture on Kafka's *Metamorphosis* discusses three types of people, a city-person, a professional botanist and a local farmer, walking through the same landscape each embodying three different worlds and thus three different realities and the pattern would continue with any number of other people. Nabokov claims this is so because "the most objective words *tree, road, flower, sky, barn, thumb, rain* have in each, totally different subjective connotations."⁵³³ Rather than the landscape as an objective and detached plain upon which these things happen, landscape is the relationship between the subjective and the objective connotations of *tree, road, flower, sky, barn, thumb* or *rain* and the kind of reality formed by their relationship is expressive of a particular landscape reality that is made in experience and circumstances social, cultural, economic, political and historical. In what Heidegger calls "the thingness of things" there is a relationship between biography and geography.⁵³⁴ Landscapes are geographical biographies that tell of a relationship between human and land in the language of its reality.

Daniels and Nash explore this connection between the biographical and geographical. The idea of the lifepath is one formed geographically and the reality of Nabokov's different walkers is a testament to that. Their reality is dependent upon their occupation, their purpose and their circumstances. Landscape realities are mapped with a biographical sense so that landscapes form self from self in restoration and transformation. For Daniels and Nash there is a relationship between script and space

⁵³³ Nabokov, V. (1980) 'Franz Kafka: "The Metamorphosis"' in Nabokov, V., Bowers, F. (ed.) *Lectures on Literature*, London, George Weidenfeld & Nicolson, pp.251-285 (p.253).

⁵³⁴ Heidegger, M. (1971) *Poetry, Language, Thought*, New York, Harper Colophon, pp. 213-229.

in the making of individual and collective life histories. This is particularly the case in travel writing, novels, poems and the memoirs of professional geographers.⁵³⁵

Work in humanistic geography such as that of Graham Rowles as exemplified by Cloke et al. in *Practising Human Geography*, is noted as praiseworthy for its first person narrative writing style that goes beyond explanation and generalisation in the confrontation of one's own perceptions.⁵³⁶ This is a tradition built on the ideas of the lifeworld cultivated by Buttimer and a belief in the relevance of recounting directly lived experience.⁵³⁷ The use of "I" indicates and expresses a proximity or intimacy that unveils the subjectivity of place. These developments in geographical scholarship lay important foundations for the progress of the subjective but arguably to the detriment of an objective presence that renders an entirely subjective approach elusive in its criteria for evaluation.⁵³⁸ Aware of this idea, this work has developed an idea of landscape as relationship in both senses of what it is in the abstract and how its status is rendered in its performance so that there is a sense of stability related to a sense of fluidity and a sense of sameness related to a sense of difference. In the status of these relationships landscape realities are formed.

An expression of landscape realities that sediment in a locationally specific context may be considered in place and in the sense of a place but by the same measure that expression may be defined by a sense of placelessness. It is a way of articulating specificity in landscape, a way of building up, communicating or seeking locationally specific, maybe local, knowledge and belonging. This communication feeds into landscape and develops the experiential differences of the individual. One is participating in landscape activity when one talks of "a nice place" or "a horrible place". This is somewhat related to Olwig's idea of landscape as an "expression of the practices of habitation through which the habitus of place is generated and laid down as custom

⁵³⁵ Daniels, S. & Nash, C. (2004) 'Lifepaths: Geography and Biography', *Journal of Historical Geography*, (30) 3, 449-458.

⁵³⁶ Cloke, P., Cook, I., Crang, P., Goodwin, M., Painter, J., Philo, C. (2004) *Practising Human Geography*, London, SAGE, p.178. E.g. Rowles, G. D. (1978) *Prisoners of Space? Exploring the Geographical Experience of Older People*, Colorado, Westview Press.

⁵³⁷ Buttimer, A. & Seamon, D. (eds.) (1980) *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, London, Croom Helm.

⁵³⁸ E.g. Pickles (1985) op cit.

and law upon the physical fabric of the land.”⁵³⁹ However there is a difference in the sense that landscape activity, as developed here, may be a practice of habitation but that habitation is never conclusive and certain. Thus habitation and place are kinds of landscape activity and this section is designed to illustrate in a direct sense, kinds of landscape realities changing with who one is, where one has been and how one feels.

Landscape is a living, changing thing and cannot ever really come to an end. If landscape is an idea based on cyclicity then whatever should be written about it should also express that motif. As a result this work on landscape is written in a cyclical manner. Beyond observing the possibility of kinds of reality and their interpretation through the example of poetry, this section articulates them directly through personal reflection. Creating a novel working space in each section has the effect on the overall work of creating possibility that takes nothing for granted in familiarity but unveils possibility enabling a periodic renewal and reinvention. The locality of each section feeds into the character of the work as a whole. For example, the interpretation that characterised the previous section is not an end in itself as it does not determine meaning but it is of use in finding a sense of meaning in a working space of articulation.⁵⁴⁰ By articulation through a first-person narrative I hope to imbue the work with a sense of meaning that may be related to by others. In the sense of these experiences there is obdurate sameness belying the difference in their detail. For myself, this is an articulation of landscape realities implicitly based on the observations and interpretations of the previous sections.⁵⁴¹

The ways of making landscape as interpreted in the previous part might be drawn broadly into two distinct approaches. These may be considered a “Heaneyesque” approach and a Yeatsian approach. Where Heaney sought to allow the organic restoration of something deep-down in oneself in a kind of feeling into words that was a natural confluence of life and work, Yeats’ mode of expression was built more on mastery of language, chasing life with the work of wielding language in a way that

⁵³⁹ Olwig, K. (2002) *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, p.226. See also Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

⁵⁴⁰ Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (198) cf. p.156, n.358.

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Buttimer, A. (1993) *Geography and the Human Spirit*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press.

appeared to, but substantially did not, separate life and work.⁵⁴² The approach taken in this final part equates more in theory with the approach of Heaney in that experiences feel their way into words that are lured into the product of a landscape. Living experience has influenced the particular character of this thesis as this thesis has influenced the living experience of its writer. In coming to terms with an idea of landscape, observing an outline of what it might be in a general sense, progressing to interpreting its meaning somewhere in the space between general and particular, this stage articulates its use in a particular way. Recalling Frost, “[y]ou can’t be universal without being colloquial, can you? It’s like trying to embrace the wind.”⁵⁴³

This final part is built around ideas of coming and going, in particular between urban and rural as illustrated through the titles of the chapters ‘From Here to There’ and ‘From There to Here’. Leaving a place and coming back to it, things not seen, realised or appreciated before can make themselves apparent. Knowledge and awareness of the characteristics of our own particular landscape relationship are continually changing. Distances spatial and temporal play their part as humans grow closer to land and grow apart from it again. Intimacy of communication, the expressions and terms that form that relationship change in the spaces created by distance. It is a cycle, an ongoing process that flows through the product of “here” having gathered its momentum from “there”.

Considered in the development of the work as a whole, the renditions of this section are implicit in the overall detail of the work. This implicitness illustrates a sameness that belies difference. These vignettes all appear differently but the essential element of a relationship that has been observed and interpreted thus far belies difference with an observable sameness. Thus in this section there is an ending, but it is simply the ending of a particular manner, a culmination in an apparent reality. Engagement with these articulations underlines the potential for new beginning towards another particular manner of expression. Such particulars are united as facets of a universal form. It is

⁵⁴² See p.185 above.

⁵⁴³ Buxton, R. (2004) *Robert Frost and Northern Irish Poetry*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 49-50. See p. 199, n.472 above.

only the facets that appear while the form defies the completeness of articulation. The mental map that concluded the first part is simply a skeleton that may be fleshed in innumerable different ways.⁵⁴⁴ This final part is a way of fleshing the bones of that observable form via the interpretation of ways of doing and performance by the example of poetry. In articulating practice, the way of this third part is enabled by experiential fieldwork and the ordinariness of simple experiences like walking, living and working in town, playing as a child in fields and growing up to work in them. As Lorimer contends “[p]articularity and mundanity are...the qualities that matter most.”⁵⁴⁵ This quotidian ordinariness is important and it is the first point of entry to a knowable idea of landscape. As Duffy writes, “[o]rdinary landscapes...are ones that people inhabit and work in, landscapes produced essentially through routine practice.”⁵⁴⁶ Such development brings the observations of abstraction and its interpretations in art, returning as Gibbons put it, “‘back to the rough ground’, as the philosopher Wittgenstein described it, of inchoate, everyday experience.”⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁴ Fig. 4.1, p.146.

⁵⁴⁵ Lorimer, H. (2003) ‘Telling Small Stories: Spaces of Knowledge and the Practice of Geography’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 28(2), pp. 197-217, (p.200).

⁵⁴⁶ Duffy, P. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, p.20.

⁵⁴⁷ Gibbons, L. (2002) ‘Space, Place and Public Art: Sligo and its surroundings’ in Kelly, L. & McDonagh, M. (eds.) *Placing Art: A Colloquium on Public Art in Rural, Coastal and Small Urban Environment*, Sligo, Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council, pp.15-31 (p.16). See Wittgenstein (1953) op cit., “We have got onto slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk so we need friction. Back to the rough ground!” (107). It is in tension and friction that landscapes and the particularity of their realities are made as visible propositions towards an invisible ideal.

Chapter Eight: From Here to There

“Surrounded by places, and always in one place or another, men and women talk about them constantly, and it is from listening in on such exchanges and then trying to ascertain what has gotten said that interested outsiders can begin to appreciate what the encompassing landscape is really all about.”

- Keith Basso - *Wisdom Sits in Places*⁵⁴⁸

8.1 The Blue Hayshed

A blue hayshed is quite a rare sight in the Irish countryside. The most common colour where I come from in the Irish midlands is red.⁵⁴⁹ Perhaps I am more assured in this assertion because the hayshed on the farm I grew up on is red and its colour was never an issue worthy of comment. The hayshed has been home not only to hay but also firewood, machinery, tools and the occasional hen or duck has settled in to one of its corners. Thinking of it now, there is often less hay in it than anything else. Yet, I still call it ‘the hayshed’. It is a feature that, despite its size, goes largely unnoticed. It is a place where things are left if there’s nowhere else to leave them.

I was prompted to notice our own red hayshed and to look at the farmyard differently when I came across a hayshed in blue livery. Visiting another farm, it was the first thing to catch my attention. Its strangeness shaped my sense of its reality. The way it related to the traditional growthy greens and earthy browns and grey concrete walls changed the look of the entire scene as I had expectedly imagined it in my mind before seeing it in actuality. The farm was a typical farm yet its colour somehow rendered it atypical. The surrounding yard and fields were altogether different in sight. I had never seen a hayshed painted in such a colour before and nor, might I add, did I care for it very much but its unusual appearance framed my making of the landscape. Before I saw the blue hayshed I imagined a yard much like my own where its colours would be much the same.

I had given no thought to colour or held no awareness of its potential. The introduction of the shed, something so typical of an Irish farmstead was something so

⁵⁴⁸ Basso, K. (1995) *Wisdom Sits in Places*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, p.109.

⁵⁴⁹ See Aalen, F.H.A. (1997) ‘Buildings’ in Aalen, F.H.A., Whelan, K. & Stout, M. *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.145-180, (p.167).

different and revealed a sense of colour that was always there and yet was not there. My sense of the landscape was changed by the unconcealed potential of colour. To the family who lived on the farm and to those who lived in the surrounding community the blue hayshed was by then, and continues to be, a familiar sight and, as my hayshed was to me, just as unworthy of note. In fact, the blue hayshed was more of a hayshed than my own because it was packed to the rafters with sweet smelling hay. By the time I had left, the experience of the blue hayshed remained with me. I stored away the landscape I had created in my memory and brought it home.

Having experienced the blue hayshed, the landscape of my own farm was transformed in its detail. The glossy red looked different since my eyes had been filled with the blue strangeness of an otherwise identical shed. I wondered why I should consider blue any less normal than red. Both stand out in the earthy colours of a farming landscape. I concluded then that neither colour was particularly 'normal'. My own red hayshed was no longer just 'a hayshed' but 'a red hayshed'. Colour had become a feature of note in the articulation of my landscape.

Visiting the farm with the blue hayshed and talking to the farmer, I wondered if I might ask him about his blue hayshed. I was sure there was some story to it. As it transpired, I didn't ask and I immediately regretted not doing so. Almost immediately after that I realised there wasn't much point to hearing the story of how a shed came to be blue. It was there to be accepted as it was. I figured were the farmer in my farmyard it would be unlikely that he would ask how my hayshed came to be red. Nor did it strike me that he would be particularly interested if I volunteered the story of going to a hardware shop and buying a drum of red paint as he had most likely bought a drum of blue paint. I was relieved I hadn't asked and so in the conversation of our realities, our landscapes were shaped in the unreliably reliable weather, the thrift and trade of crops and cattle, the growth of grass and the price of milk.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁵⁰ On the business of dairy farming see Sreenan, J.M. (1992) *Breeding the Dairy Herd*, Dublin, Teagasc; Keane, M. & Lucey, D.I.F. (1991) *Irish Dairying Modelling the Spatial Dimension*, Cork, Cork University Press. On the relationship between herders and herds, see Lorimer H. (2006) 'Herding memories of humans and animals' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24(4), 497-518.

The difference of that hayshed among the army of red ones dotted around the countryside prompted me to look beyond an ordinary tradition and to give a second look to landscapes, become more aware of their detail, a detail taking me beyond ordinariness to ordinariness again. Now, if I am about to visit somewhere new that might have a hayshed, tradition doesn't have me assume that it will be a red hayshed. I smile and wonder if perhaps the next one will be yellow or orange. The experience of that landscape changed the way I shape and imagine land, renewing ordinariness by broadening its scope beyond taken-for-grantedness. At the brink of aridity there is transformation.

8.2 “E’er a” or “a”?

As a child in early years at school, I asked one of my class mates: “Is there e’er a pencil in the drawer?”⁵⁵¹ I was immediately reprimanded by the teacher for my turn of phrase. It was not considered the proper way to speak. Naturally of course the proper way to phrase the question would have been: “Is there a pencil in the drawer?” I was confused by all this. I had often heard such turns of phrase and no one else seemed bothered by them. For me at that time it was natural to ask “Is there e’er a pencil in the drawer?” Outside the classroom other children were asking each other if they had “e’er a sweet” or in the negative: “Have you ne’er a sweet?” Of course I wasn’t about to voice my feelings on the injustices perpetrated for fear that I would land myself and my classmates in trouble so I let it go. I didn’t give the issue much thought save to think about how I would say what I wanted to say before I spoke aloud. In this respect, there was a different language on either side of the classroom door. There were two voices. I quickly saw the logic and reason in the grammar of the language and so, quickly enough, the “e’er a” and “ne’er a” faded out of my speech. It didn’t make sense that one should ask in an off-hand manner: “Is there ever a pencil in the drawer?” The words seemed suited to exasperation and frustration at there never being a pencil there. Hearing other’s use the terms sounded wrong to my own ear. In these strange moments

⁵⁵¹ The term “arra” is noted as a corruption of “e’er a” or “ever a”. See Farmer, J.S. (1921) *A Dictionary of Slang and Colloquial English Slang and its Dialogues*, London, George Routledge & Sons Limited. p.15. Cf. Share, B. (2003) *Slanguage: A Dictionary of Slang and Colloquial English in Ireland*, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, p.98.

of friction between what I once thought was right and now thought was wrong, I was unutterably aware of the language that distinguished a landscape and a place. From this I found nature again and the landscape forming the senses of my words wove me indistinguishably into its fabric again. I grew into the use of “a” giving it as little thought as breathing, reminded of “e’er a” on occasion by its utterance in conversation.⁵⁵²

As it stood there was a gentle friction between educational formality and informality in the course of my everyday life. Formality seemed a far away abstraction and informality was local in the conversations and terms of the realities of locality. By the friction of formality and informality my sense of reality was always changing. In tension there is the potential of continual discovery and change. Each person finds a way to landscape, a way to partake in and explain the relationship they have with land by their action. Finding a sense of environment I found aspects of myself in the trees, the fields, the hills, the towns and cities and how I changed with these through passing time and circumstance. Vitally, I came to realise that I and everyone else changes with them. The process of evolving and sharing language makes the communication of human and land traceable in the biography of its rendered realities.

In the course of everyday speech and the environment in which one lives, the dialect of a language, the sounds of its expression carry a musical quality. Turns of phrase that might sound rustic or rough or just plain wrong to some sensibilities, sound right and proper to others. So it was that the landscapes of my area were peppered with minor idiosyncrasies like “e’er a” and “ne’er a” along with “a”, “any”, or “no”. In writing, the padding of “a” with “e’er” seems superfluous but to the ear of an accent it sounds lyrical. In much the same way the term “nowt” fits a Yorkshire accent but often sounds ill-fitting in another accent.⁵⁵³ There is a particular sound of its sense as the same thing may be said in innumerable different ways not only by the words spoken but also the way in which they are spoken.

⁵⁵² Cf. p.206, n.499 and the idea of colloquial speech as having a particular sound, demonstrated by Heaney listening to an old recording of Kavanagh in ‘The Loose Box’. This carries through in the natural rhythms of talk and conversation. See appendix p.286.

⁵⁵³ E.g. Wright, J. (1905) *The English Dialect Dictionary*, London, Amen Corner.

With the passage of time and experience and the circumstances of everyday life, “e’er a” and “ne’er a” no longer sounded right to my logical sensibility. They sometimes crept into my speech and formed the articulated cadence of my landscape because it was part of a language I shared in. The rhythm of my speech seeks a way that is all but unknown to me and therefore by times it is in defiance of grammatical logic. My language has changed over the years through different ways of communicating in different communities. In reading and talking with different people, even watching television or listening to a radio, our language is influenced. Turns of phrase that once sounded right and normal sometimes change into strangeness. Even the smallest, apparently insignificant term can change our dialect and the way we articulate the sounds of our landscapes. It can move us towards and away from landscape as we try to adapt and weave it with the distinction of our own thread.

In similar sorts of linguistic contrast, going back to the hayshed, I once heard someone call it a “haybarn”. I felt the term didn’t fit somehow. It described the building perfectly well but it sounded different and not normal to an ear that had listened to talk of haysheds. Another case is that of furze and gorse. I had always called the plant furze because I had always heard it called furze.⁵⁵⁴ It was the association of name and object. As a young child when I heard someone call it gorse, I argued that it was not “gorse” but furze. Up until then I had no sense of what gorse was. For a while after picking up the term ‘gorse’, my landscapes moved to this rendition. I tried it for size in speech but it didn’t really settle and so it affirmed me in my use of “furze”.⁵⁵⁵ The familiar and strange sounds words carry amplify and unconceal landscapes in

⁵⁵⁴ E.g. Gailey, A. & O hÓgain, D. (eds.) (1982) *Gold Under the Furze: Studies in Folk Tradition*, Dublin, Glendale Press. Another term besides furze and gorse is Kavanagh’s “whin bushes” in ‘A Christmas Childhood’. “I looked and three whin bushes rode across/The horizon — The Three Wise Kings.” Kavanagh, P. (1940) ‘A Christmas Childhood’ in Kavanagh, P. (ed.) (1984) *The Complete Poems*, Newbridge, The Goldsmith Press, p.143. See also Kavanagh’s Advent: “...the prophetic astonishment in the tedious talking/Of an old fool will awake for us and bring/You and me to the yard gate to watch the whins/And the bog-holes, cart-tracks, old stables where Time begins.” Kavanagh, P. (1972) ‘Advent’ in Kavanagh, P. *Collected Poems*, London, Martin Brian & O’Keefe Ltd. p.70.

⁵⁵⁵ I was brought deeper into the word and what it stood for by the vast variety of possible uses for furze detailed by Lucas (1960). See Lucas, A.T. (1960) *Furze: A Survey and History of its Uses in Ireland*, Dublin, The Folklore of Ireland Society. Furze took on a new important significance, bringing me outside preconceptions of its uselessness. In conversation, I have since heard its flowers may be used for wine also.

different ways as kinds of the universality of landscape are unveiled in communication and community.

As a further illustration I am reminded of my own relationship to the terms “boundary” and “mearing”.⁵⁵⁶ The neighbouring farm to ours was said to be ‘bordering’ ours, that “a boundary line runs down between those two fields.” This prompted me to think of my own expression of “the mearing”. I wondered why I called it a mearing. ‘Border’ and ‘boundary’ somehow made more sense logically. ‘Mearing’ seemed quite a random word among the more common borders and boundaries. It was a more unusual word that I was often asked to repeat with a questioning glance from those unfamiliar with it. Raising questions of the “mearing” rattled my confidence in the word. The problem was, I couldn’t explain the word or say why a fence or hedge between two fields spoke to me as “a mearing”. It faded from my vocabulary as I leaned toward the more typical term of ‘boundary fence’ or ‘boundary ditch’.

Funnily enough, given it was conversation that halted my use of the word; it was in conversation about the term that its use was reborn. I had formally studied Ancient Greek language and this was a source of amusement to some who wondered what possible benefit could come from studying a supposedly “dead” language. It was through studying the language that I came across the verb ‘*meiroma?*’. It means ‘to get as one’s share’ or ‘to get as an allotment or section’. It gave an appropriateness to my use of ‘mearing’. Studying Latin, similarly a language that suffers the same fate as Greek, I came across ‘*moerium*’, meaning ‘a wall’. An interest in etymology, enabled by the tools of classical language and in part prompted by a need to express the world I lived in on my own terms, brought me to the Anglo-Saxon term ‘*maere*’ or ‘*gemaere*’, a boundary marker or ridge. Carrying on, the word evolved through the similarly meaning Middle English ‘*mere*’ to the modern English ‘mearing’.⁵⁵⁷ This experience taught me that there is no such thing as a dead language and what is mistaken for lifelessness is simply

⁵⁵⁶ E.g. Feehan, J. (2003) *Farming in Ireland: History, Heritage and Environment*, Dublin, UCD Faculty of Agriculture.

⁵⁵⁷ See Weekley, E. (1921) *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, London, John Murray. p.920. See also MacMahon, S. & O’Donoghue, J. (2004) *Brewers Dictionary of Irish Phrase and Fable*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p.535. Cf. Campbell, J. (1911) *Mearing Stones: Leaves from My Notebook on Tramp in Donegal*, Dublin, Maunsell & Company.

hiddenness. These words had trickled down to my everyday terminology and so these languages were restored in the transformation of “mearing”.

The language through restoration had transformed my sense of the landscape. Reluctant to use “mearing” to render my landscape, I delighted in the word again and in detail that seemed to resonate through all the levels of my interest. I brought my experience and circumstances to the land and it responded. I suddenly understood what Heaney meant by finding a middle voice.⁵⁵⁸ As time goes on I wonder if I’ll forget the significance of the word and in familiarity take it for granted. When it should happen, I expect some prompt reminding me I don’t really know where I am or how I feel in a landscape will lead me to find a sense of it again by a different way.

8.3 Tree

The ditch drawing together two small fields on our farm is made up of whitethorn.⁵⁵⁹ At various arbitrary points along it there are tall ash trees.⁵⁶⁰ For some people a ditch is a narrow drainage channel, for others, including myself, a ditch is rather like a hedge, albeit a slightly thicker, coarser hedge. In my own experience, when cut, it is cut more

⁵⁵⁸ See p.172. Cf. Scafi, A. (1999) ‘Paradise as a Space-Time Boundary Zone’ in Cosgrove, D. (eds.) *Mappings*, London, Reaktion Books, pp.57-58. This helpfully illustrates the scalar variation between macrocosmic and microcosmic boundaries such as range from the concept of paradise to a rickety fence separating two small fields. There is a kind of universality that illustrates the concept of landscape as a whole. Variations in scales of time and space are differences held together by like purpose and function. Middle voices find expression drawing on such a sense of universality. On the significance of boundaries as features and components in landscape see Muir, R. (1999) ‘The Components of Landscape in *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan. pp. 75-84. See also Robinson, T. (1995) *Stones of Aran: Labyrinth*, Dublin, Lilliput Press on the boundary wall between the Aran townlands of *Cill Ronain* and *An Coinleach*. It “is a wall not much stouter nor much less crooked than all the others, that comes dog-legging across the island from North to South.” p.100.

⁵⁵⁹ The provision of whitethorn quicks was a common feature of development programmes initiated through the landed estate system up to the mid-nineteenth century. This may be one such example of the influence of these terms of lease on today’s landscape. Cf. Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, p.87. For a map detailing the composition of field boundaries in Ireland see Aalen, F.H.A. & Whelan, K. (1997) ‘Fields’ in Aalen, F.H.A., Whelan, K. & Stout, M. *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.134-145 (p.135). Most abundant in the midland region are “tall vigorous hedges of thorns, ash, elder – abundant trees”. See also Aalen et al (1997) p.137 on field patterns and a map detailing field pattern distribution. In the midlands and Leinster area, large fields are commonest with small and medium patterns gaining precedence as one moves westward.

⁵⁶⁰ Cf. Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, pp.39-42.

coarsely by a tractor mounted hedge cutter than a household hedge that is clipped in a neater manner by hand. I find the reason for this is simply practical. The ditch is often far taller, wider and longer than a hedge. By the same methods of upkeep, a ditch would consume a great deal of time and energy that might be better spent elsewhere. Tellingly though in converse, there is a greater sense of fussiness about the spaces directly around the house and farm than away in the fields.⁵⁶¹ An untidy hedge around the house, to me, would be a source not quite of shamefulness, but perhaps discomfort. I find I have a keener, fussier sense of need in the way I landscape around the house.

Things have a more pressing “need” for tidying up in the vicinity of the house. After clipping the hedge for instance, things have a way of making me aware of them. A gate or door might need touching up with paint, a pot-hole needs filling, a gutter needs cleaning, a creeper needs trimming, the lawn needs cutting or weeds need pulling. Looking at this scenario one can see that what might be traditionally considered an urban imagination in the kempt environs of the back garden or the suburb, finds its sustainability in what might be considered a rural pastoral imagination. Landscapes can be urban or rural or any combination, as all its propositions are of equal value since none are perfect.⁵⁶² There is a commingling of the spaces in which we work and live. Letting the idea run further, order and chaos or nature and culture should not be considered in opposition but rather connected and as Schama puts it: “mutually sustaining”.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶¹ The idea of the house or dwelling place as central to landscape is insisted upon by Jackson (1997) as noted by Wylie (2007). As can be seen here the activity and landscape in and around the dwelling place is conducted differently than beyond it. Not only this, but the dwelling place orientates articulation of landscape through naming. For example, fields are often referred to by their relationship to the dwelling place. For instance a field might be termed “the far field”, “the bottom Field”, the middle field” or fields at the back or in front of the house or farmyard. The same idea is related through expressions that involve going “up” or “down” the road, going “out” to the country or “into” town. See Cresswell, T. (2003) ‘Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice’ in Anderson, K. et al. (eds.) *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, London, Sage, pp.269-289 (p.271ff). See also Wylie, J. (2007) ‘J.B. Jackson and Vernacular Landscape’ in *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.40-53. This idea also goes deeper into the dwelling place itself. As Glassie writes: “The hearth is on center. Directions within the home are set by motion around the fire. You are going “down” when the hearth’s open mouth is behind you, and up when it is toward you”. Glassie, H. (1982) *Passing the Time: Folklore and History of an Ulster Community*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, p.327.

⁵⁶² Cf. Wittgenstein, L. (1949) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul (6.4.).

⁵⁶³ Schama, S. (1996) *Landscape & Memory*, London, Fontana Press, p.525.

The trees in the ditch a couple of fields away from the house were not of major concern. The same fussiness was not imposed upon them. The trees were always there, indeed for a good many years before I was born. The reality of my landscape was shaped by their tallness, their broadness, their rustling leaves in summer and their skeletal frame in winter. They cast long shadows across the field on sunny days and they were a source of shelter on wet days when heavy drops turned landscape inside out or indeed outside in if one were more familiar with rain.⁵⁶⁴ In sun, the shade the trees created and the sound of the wind rustling through their branches and leaves turned landscape. The field looked the way it did because of the trees. They had their own distinctive green colour that had their place in an environment. With the changing weather and changing seasons under grey and blue skies the landscape was constantly changing. Each day I was in the field it felt differently. Light, sound, wind whether jobs and tasks were progressing easily or with frustrating difficulty made the landscape, influenced how the land and I would respond to each other. With the trees I was acutely aware that there are as many realities as there are kinds of days.

On one particular day I went out to the field after a night where winds had blown very strongly. In the light of day the wind kept up a buffeting gust. Walking over to the field I saw immediately where a heavy branch had broken off one of the bigger trees. Fortunately it was of no real consequence to anything else around save the green grass underneath. A striking pulp-white tear shone out from the brown bark. The landscape as I had known and taken for granted was changed. The long, melancholy limb on the ground and the tree's pulpy wound changed my landscape. Observing the scene and envired in it I resolved to get the branch out of there. The best way to do it was cut up the heavy branch, load up the timber on a trailer and bring it in for firewood. This job done, I looked around at the strangeness of the appearance. What seemed a great

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. Edward Thomas' poem 'After Rain': "The rain of a night and a day and a night/ Stops at the light /Of this pale choked day. The peering sun/ Sees what has been done. /The road under the trees has a border new /Of purple hue" Thomas, E. 'After Rain' in Thomas, E. & Thomas, R.G. (ed.) (1981) *The Collected Poems of Edward Thomas*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.14. See also Heaney, S. (1972) 'Gifts of Rain' in *Wintering Out*, London, Faber & Faber, "Cloudburst and steady downpour now/ for days." The sound of rain is often its defining input in landscaping, for example the sound of rain lashing on windows and roofs. Heaney notes this describing the "Still mammal,/ straw-footed on the mud" who "fords/ his life by sounding./ Soundings." In this poem also is an expression that encapsulates fittingly the unity of human and land in landscape. "sky and ground/ are running naturally among his arms/ that grope the cropping land." pp.23-25.

empty hole filled the space where the branch used to be. Looking out through it, the horizon was extended. I saw fields and houses and the odd red haystack in the distance. The aspect of the field was changed. The movement of light and sound had changed, shaping the land differently. In the momentary strangeness of the field I suddenly noticed the vulnerability and precariousness of the by now leaning tree. Quite suddenly, it was not only the branch or lack thereof in the focus of my landscape but the entire tree. From it emanated the concern that it would not stand up to many more, if any more, strong winds. It gradually dawned on me that I would have to cut the tree down.⁵⁶⁵

Moving about the field every day and reluctant to change what was familiar, meant I was reluctant to cut the tree down. I wondered for a while if we could get away with leaving it. The growing realisation of its loss and the conspicuous frailty it exhibited in place of sturdy anonymity made it the apple of my eye. Talking to everyone else around about the tree only confirmed what I had first thought. The branch was something I had not decided on since it was already blown down. There remained a possibility with the tree, however remote, that it might last on. With the branch, I felt as though I was part of a process. Its circumstance presented to me, I participated by doing what was to me the natural thing in cutting up and taking away the broken branch. The tree as a whole was a different proposition and would effect a far more drastic change. In the end, I saw there was no way out: the tree had to go. With a few helping hands, the tree was cut up into firewood and brought home for burning. It was a heavy and laborious job and at times I wondered why I hadn't left the tree where it was and let the wind do what it would. It took two days. On the first day we got stuck in with great enthusiasm. On the second day however, I tried to come up with other easier jobs to delay going

⁵⁶⁵ For another account of a tree felling, see Robinson, T. (1995) *Stones of Aran: Labyrinth*, Dublin, Lilliput Press, p.159 in which an attempt to fell an alder tree that is believed to be sacred culminates in the one wielding the axe suffering a broken leg. The sacredness of trees is a common cultural theme. Cf. Frazer, J. G. (1963) *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, London, Macmillan. "The Dieri tribe of Central Australia regard as very sacred certain trees which are supposed to be their fathers transformed; hence they speak with reverence of these trees, and are careful that they should not be cut down or burned. If the settlers require them to hew down the trees they earnestly protest against it, asserting that were they to do so they would have no luck, and might be punished for not protecting their ancestors." p.116. See also Anderson, K. (2003) *Nature, Culture and Big Old Trees*, Austin, University of Texas Press. "Trees tell stories. In their arrangements, locations, shapes and even their tissues, they record changing environments, cultural values, social relationships and notions of the sacred." p.3.

into the field. The falling branch started a process that I was merely a part of but not yet totally aware of. The decision over what to do with the tree was already made by a combination of myself and the land. Landscapes are formed in the negotiation of tensions and expressions of decision. The thought processes that take us through nature and environment culminate in the articulated action of landscape.

In the following days I felt strange in a landscape without the tree. Every time, I went into the field my eye was drawn to the gap left behind. The whole sense of the landscape had changed. The fall of the light on the fields was different, the sounds reverberated differently about. In counting and looking along the rings of the cut tree I thought about all it had seen and how all the circles, each one a repository of a year's events, grew ever greater outward each upon the support of the last. I thought it a shame that all its years of growth could be so quickly taken. I hoped I might remember the tree and tell its story to anyone who happened to be in the field and didn't know about it. Perhaps inevitably though, I grew into the new landscape to the point where I almost forgot the tree was ever there. The ditch grew and filled out the emptiness with the rich green of a gift bestowed by the departed shadow of a dominant tree. In its new found density was a more pronounced seasonal rhythm. I found my habitus and sense of place through a landscape that would support its own growth and progression in passing days, weeks, months and years. Much like the flowering of the whitethorn ditch, the flowering of a landscape reality is an event and milestone in season and time, filling the distance between human and land through its ongoing, changing enactment. The spatialised distance between human and land is necessary for the growth of a landscape.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶⁶ E.g. Sartre, J.P. (1969 c. 1958) *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, London, Methuen, p.242ff. On the concept of habitus, Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

8.4 Forestry

Near where I live there is a forest of considerable dimensions. I have heard from different sources that it occupies either 100 Irish acres or 100 statute acres.⁵⁶⁷ I find it curious that my first inclination is to describe the outer dimension and scale of the forest as though I considered it of the utmost importance. When thinking about the forest, my consideration is first given to the look of the trees and their density and colour, the sound of wind and the way of light working their way through it. It is a commercial forestry of Sitka spruce and perhaps then it is rather more ostensibly given over to renditions in terms of resource and economic value rather than aesthetic value.⁵⁶⁸ In conversation about the forestry, the way I speak of it is distilled through these renditions. Nevertheless though, as much as the forest occupies different measurements it occupies different senses and living in the community, I am aware of its dimensions not so much for their monetary potential but for their aesthetic potential.

The forestry is formed by my sense of reality but then again it was not planted for my appreciation even if I sometimes feel as though it was. I feel I know the trees quite well in the way they relate to everything else. On sunny days, light escapes through in sporadic shafts here and there and from the outside looking in, one cannot see very far through the thick gathering. Over a small field that meres the forestry, an equally full shadow casts long over it, making the field less a field than a shed. It is a great source of shelter and I often find cattle lying down and relaxed in its protective embrace. I have raised calves in the sheltery field because it seems as though one may as well be indoors.

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. Andrews, J.H. (1985) *Plantation Acres: A Historical Study of the Irish Land surveyor and His Maps*, Belfast, Ulster Historical Foundation, esp. pp. 14-16 and pp.125-128. Andrews also notes the appearance of "acre" in placenames like "Hundred Acres" or "Forty Acres". However along with this he comments that "very few of these names get within ten percent of the truth on any known numerical definition of an acre." p.24. Cf. also Glassie, H. (1995) *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*, Indiana, Indiana University Press. Glassie refers to the way "[f]arms are measured both in acres and an old unit 'a cow's grass of land'". Hugh Nolan describes the situation for Glassie: "Well, a cow's grass was counted be the old people, three Irish acres." "Well, the Irish acre was bigger than the English acre or the statute acre." p.428.

⁵⁶⁸ Cf. Neeson, E. (1991) *A History of Irish Forestry*, Dublin, Lilliput Press; Kearney, B. & O' Connor, R. (1993) *The Impact of Forestry on Rural Communities*, Dublin, The Economic and Social Research Institute; Kilbride, C.M. (1999) *Carbon Sequestration and Irish Forests*, Dublin, COFORD, National Council for Forests and Development.

In such circumstances the forest seems to radiate warmth from its dark interior. Of course there is also the consideration that the forestry is overbearing and more concerned with deprivation than protection as it holds nurturing sunlight back from everything else.⁵⁶⁹ Such are the contrasts hidden among the trees.⁵⁷⁰

As a child I remember watching footage of a motor-race from Germany on television. At one stage, the camera panned out above the race-track to reveal a vast expanse of forest. They were spruce trees just like those I could see in my forest. The trees passed quickly beneath the camera, resplendent in their dark, blue-green foliage. Looking down on the forestry from a nearby hill, it never seemed so exotic. I remember pointing out that the forestry was just like the ones you see in Germany as though I'd been there and walked through an entire country carpeted in forest knowing it to have always been so as I had known my forest to have always been. I was amazed that I could find similarity so far away. The shade on the racetrack reminded me of the shade on the field. The way sunlight crept between the branches and burst forth in strong bright lines reminded me of the way light worked in the field. As a child I used to run around the field pretending I was racing, lazy cattle acting as spectators or obstacles. Some years later I was reminded of this enthusiasm when I read Schama's account of the German forests, noting a history of broadleaf and oak forests supplanted by quick-growing conifers. These conifers grew up for the cash on demand for naval timber.⁵⁷¹

I came to know that similar circumstances befell broadleaf forests of seventeenth-century Ireland that I had never seen.⁵⁷² The conifer forest I had come to know unquestioningly as beyond temporal consideration was in the greater scheme, strange to

⁵⁶⁹ Cf. Edward Thomas' poem 'The Other' in which the speaker expresses relief at emergence from the forest. "The forest ended. Glad I was/ To feel the light and hear the hum/ Of bees, and smell the drying grass/ And the sweet mint, because I had come/ To an end of forest, and because/ Here was both road and inn, the sum/ Of what's not forest." Thomas, E. 'The Other' in Thomas, E. & Thomas, R.G. (ed.) (1981) *The Collected Poems of Edward Thomas*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.10-13.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. for example Fraser, A. & Robbins, P. (2003) 'A Forest of Contradictions: Producing the Landscapes of the Scottish Highlands', *Antipode* 35(1), 95-118.

⁵⁷¹ Schama, S. (1996) 'Arminius Redivivus' in Schama, S. *Landscape & Memory*, London, Fontana, pp.100-120 (pp.101-102).

⁵⁷² Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press. "The plentiful supply of oakwoods in seventeenth-century Ireland was as much a driving force for British colonisation as other economic or political considerations." p.37.

these shores. The value of the oakwood as a resource brought about its disappearance as parliamentary intervention of the eighteenth century encouraged protection and new planting.⁵⁷³ The slow maturity of the oak denied ultimately denied its reappearance, to be replaced with quickly maturing types of conifer like Sitka spruce which would become increasingly popular into the twentieth century owing to the purpose of intensive cultivation.⁵⁷⁴ Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, exportation turned to importation as new seeds were introduced. The Sitka spruce for instance was introduced to Ireland from America by David Douglas in the 1830s. A tree grown from seed he collected currently resides in Co. Waterford as the tallest tree in the country.⁵⁷⁵

A culture of destruction was transformed into a culture of planting where trees stood as paragons of order and superiority.⁵⁷⁶ As the twentieth century progressed, forestry plantations moved from private to state holdings and these ultimately swung toward conifers.⁵⁷⁷ This was partly due to the low purchase price and poor grazing value of the acidic type of land to which they were suited, but more pertinently their comparatively rapid maturity befitted an increasingly intensive mode of production. The forestry by which I live is just such an example. A small but steadily increasing percentage of private conifer forestry was a very recent development emerging in the 1980s. This has seen a transition back to private forestry as state afforestation is reduced.⁵⁷⁸ The field sense of the forestry in my landscape led me to a curiosity for its history and layers of detail unfurled with each turn of a page in deskwork. The strangeness of the conifer forest to Irish soil somehow left it unloved when one imagined the lush broad-leafed

⁵⁷³ Smyth, W.J. (1996) 'The Greening of Ireland-Tenant Tree Planting in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Irish Forestry: Journal of the Society of Irish Foresters*, 54 (1), 55-72.

⁵⁷⁴ Kole, C. (2007) *Genome Mapping and Molecular Breeding in Plants: Forest Trees*, Berlin, Springer, p.94. See also O'Carroll, N. (2004) *Forestry in Ireland: A Concise History*, Dublin, COFORD. See Gilmor, D.A. (1992) 'The Upsurge in Private Afforestation in Ireland', *Irish Geography*, 25(1), 89-97.

⁵⁷⁵ Joyce, P.M. & O'Carroll, N. (2002) *Sitka Spruce in Ireland*, Dublin, COFORD.

⁵⁷⁶ Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, p.39.

⁵⁷⁷ See Tomlinson, R. 'Forests and Woodlands in Aalen, F.H.A, Whelan, K. & Stout, M. *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.122-133 (pp.129-133).

⁵⁷⁸ See Tomlinson, R. (1997) 'Forests and Woodlands' in Aalen, F.H.A, Whelan, K. & Stout, M. (eds.) *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork University Press, Cork, pp.122-133. See also McNeill, J.R. (2000) 'Forests' in McNeill, J.R. *Something New Under the Sun*, London, Allen Lane, pp. 229-237. See also www.teagasc.ie/forestry/.

oaks of yore.⁵⁷⁹ It reminded me of my feeling towards the forestry before the revelatory exoticism of the German Grand Prix.

As a young child, before I had seen the race, I disliked the forestry and was distrustful of it. The trees seemed dark and threatening. Its branches were creaking sinisterly instead of waving benignly. I feared they might fall or that something nefarious might come out from the darkness within and get me. I remember seeing movement once in the forest and wondering what it was. I was told with a smile that it was probably a fox or a badger and wouldn't do any harm. I still never went in the forest though, preferring to remain outside and speculate wildly about what was going on in there since it couldn't be the case that there was nothing happening. Ironically, the young child in particular seems to see more in darkness than light. Quickly enough as one grows up these realities fade away into depths of memory, prompted by some feature, their earnest innocence an amusement. Reading about the child-like hobbits in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* for instance raised a knowing smile.⁵⁸⁰

Few features so singularly embodied such contrast as the forestry. There were times when I wanted to live in the forest having seen some celluloid action hero wreaking gleeful havoc, as there were times I didn't want to be near it having been influenced by some horror movie.⁵⁸¹ As I grew older, I also grew to realise the practical benefits of the forest were immense. I was glad it was there for the welfare of both myself and the

⁵⁷⁹ Laments for the destruction of the woodlands in the eighteenth century are common in old Irish poetry. Such examples include the fall of the house of the Countess of Iveagh in Lament for Kilcash: "Now what will we do for timber,/with the last of the woods laid low?/There's no talk of Kilcash or its household/ and its bell will be struck no more." See Kinsella, T., O' Tuama, S. (ed.) (1981) *An Duanaire 1600-1900: Poems of the Dispossessed*, Dublin, Dolmen Press p.253ff. Cf. Monaghan, P. (2003) *The Red-Haired Girl from the Bog: The Landscape of Celtic Myth and Spirit*, California, New World Library, pp.123-126. For a practical illustration cf. Taylor and Skinner's late 18th C. road maps. Taylor, G. & Skinner, A. (1783), Andrews, J.H. (intro.) (1969) *Maps of the Roads of Ireland*, Shannon, Irish University Press. Cf. Smyth (1984) p.24.

⁵⁸⁰ Tolkien, J.R.R. (1966) 'Chapter VI: The Old Forest' in Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of The Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, London, Allen & Unwin. pp. 120-134.

⁵⁸¹ For a consideration of the dissolution of a reality/representation divide and an introduction to the growing engagement with film by geographers see Cresswell, T. & Dixon, D. (2002) 'Introduction' in Cresswell, T. & Dixon, D. (eds.) *Engaging Film: Geographies of Mobility and Identity*, Boston, Rowman & Littlefield, pp.1-11. See also Winchester, H., Kong, L. & Dunn, K. (2003) '3.3.1. Filmscapes' in *Landscapes: Ways of Imagining the World*, Essex, Pearson Education Limited, pp. 42-50 discussing the example of *Crocodile Dundee* as a feature of everyday popular culture and its role in Australian national identity. See also Simmons, I.G. (1997) 'The 'real' world and its alternatives' in Simmons, I.G. *Humanity & Environment: A Cultural Ecology*, Essex, Longman Limited, pp.237-271, esp. pp.255-271.

animals in the field. There were often times when I was in the field or nearby when feeling the first drops of rain, I, like some of the cattle, made straight for the cover of the forestry and stood with great satisfaction in its bone-dry pockets. The rain could fall as heavily as it liked because it would not get me. The forest embodies curiosity and conundrum through the potential of its vagueness and mystery and the potential for knowing the unknown.

One day I was in the field beside the forestry when I heard noise of a machine. Later, in conversation with neighbours who had also heard it, we speculated about what could be happening. We concluded quickly enough that it was more than likely a machine for cutting the trees with a view to thinning the forestry.⁵⁸² Someone mentioned that they might cut the forestry away entirely. I didn't think this was likely. I probably dismissed the idea because the forestry had been fully grown there before I was born. It seemed too great a prospect to cut it all down. Sure enough, I was proven wrong and within a few days the noise of a voice was growing closer and louder as a large gap was growing away on the other side of the forestry. The tips of the trees were disappearing steadily and suddenly areal dimensions were of first importance. I wondered about when they would get around to cutting on our side of the forestry as a reality without a forest became increasingly likely.

As the forestry was cut away, there was a real sense of the process of forming a landscape, particularly so since I was engaged in figuring out a sense of what landscape meant and how it worked in our everyday lives as part of my work on this thesis. With the violence of this example, everyday unveiled a new reality as landscapes were quickly forming and reforming. The details of renewal and transformation were on a far greater scale than I had ever experienced directly. In the scale of the forestry and the enormity of its presence new perspectives and revelations were opening new landscapes and revealing far away fields and houses I had not seen before. There was an ostensibly new

⁵⁸² E.g. "Thinning is the removal of trees at intervals over the rotation of the forest crop thereby concentrating volume growth on the remaining better spaced, better quality stems." Booth, A. & Whelan, D.P. (2006) *Irish Thinning Protocol: A Complete Step by Step Guide to the Requirements and Implementation of Thinning Systems in Ireland*, Dublin, Department of Agriculture, p. 3. See also Gallagher, G.J. (1969) 'The Thinning of Sitka Spruce – Two Experiments', *Irish Forestry: The Journal of the Society of Irish Foresters*, 26(1).

and different landscape to be a part of every day. I tried to remember or commit to some repository in my mind what the forest looked like in its entirety. There was a strange feeling of urgency about the event, an urgency that had never been imbued in the realities of this landscape. I was amazed at the progress of the cutting and within a few short weeks the forestry had disappeared.

As the forestry retreated rapidly from the mearing of the small field, the ground left behind was laden with debris, off-cuts and branches. It was a most unusual sight. The small field was entirely changed. There was no longer any shade or shelter. From a distance the field looked a different shape. It was covered in light rather than shadow. The forest was shorn down to the level of the other fields. There were no more shadows. My shape of the land was ostensibly different. One of the older people in the area told me about the time he had seen all the forestry covered in grass, how he had walked its fields and tended the cattle. I struggled to see sweet grass and fattened cattle where there was a forestry. With the trees gone, I could see it. He could see it too. In the transformation of landscape there was renewal. After a break of some weeks, the rest of the forest was cut away. The lay of the land was entirely different but to some it hadn't changed at all. I wondered if I might talk in years to come of the time there was a forest there. I admired the industry and intensity of the work and myself and others in the area would joke at the idea of cutting the forest away with handsaws. In the urgent excitement of the work and its rapid progress, I was suddenly struck by the change, knowing that things would never be the same again. As time went on though I realised it would grow into a different kind of "same" as landscape and reality continue on through change.

Thinking back on the experience, the most striking aspect of the harvested forest was the smell. A fresh, sappy, woody pine hung in the air for a great many days. It was a strangely clean and fertile smell amidst what might dramatically be rendered the destruction of the forest. At present, great shocks of purple heather sprout sporadically into the freshness. The new smell and the colour of the heather changes my landscape and the openness leaves potential for things to be noticed where they couldn't before. This is a new field and I realised I have never really known the field and the area nor

will I ever completely know it. There will be days when I'll walk about in slumbering routine only to be woken up by a sound as small as ruffling leaves or the soundlessness of their absence. Its capacity for surprise, its capacity for revealing realities is endless. This is not merely true of a forest but true of all landscape action.

Nash has written that “[r]ethinking history can also mean thinking about Geography.”⁵⁸³ The chapters included in this part are about history and remembering experiences that lead to the cultivation of this work in its entirety. It is about history and memory, recollections mapped out in layers of landscape history. Finding or co-ordinating a way through history, sifting through memory in search of origins is a search in geography. It is a search for landscape and the layers of change in which land and human are inextricably linked together. We move in spaces and places to find our co-ordinates and bearings, to find our thoughts and prompt our memories. These may be found in the most ordinary of features and in the most ordinary of experiences. The features of the landscape hold on to these memories and keep them in safe-keeping until we look again and discover a meaning heretofore lying dormant. In that meaning we are presented with a vision of what Geography means in the way we shape and are shaped by the lands we have come to know in our own unique and different ways. At the interface of a temporal and spatially rooted experience the soul, as Edmund Burke would put it, is turned “in upon herself” to look for new realities in search of the fulfilment of its needs.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁸³ Nash, C. (1998) ‘Visionary Geographies: Designs for Developing Ireland’, *History Workshop Journal*, 45, 49-78, (p.51).

⁵⁸⁴ From a letter of Edmund Burke to Richard Shackleton, quoted in Samuels, A. P.I. (1923) *The Early Life, Correspondence and Writings of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke LL D.*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.84. Cf. McLoughlin, T.O. (1987) ‘The Context of Edmund Burke’s *The Reformer*’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr*, 2, 37-55.

Chapter Nine: From There to Here

“Always get rid of the idea of the private object in this way: assume that it constantly changes, but that you do not notice the change because your memory constantly deceives you.”

- Ludwig Wittgenstein - *Philosophical Investigations*⁵⁸⁵

9.1 Town

Given a focus on what might be considered rural realities so far in this section, there may be a feeling that non-urban areas are somehow more privileged than urban areas for landscaping but in its activity this is simply not the case.⁵⁸⁶ The experiences and realities of this section are personal reflections of the everyday and given that it is an everyday lived for the most part in rural environments, there is inevitably an inclination towards a rural sense. Landscape is an action and a proposition towards an abstract sense that is performed irrespective of rural or urban contexts. The proposition may be formed from a rural sensibility but that does not preclude a proposition from an urban sensibility; like cooking, it doesn't matter where one is if one is to be identified as simply cooking.⁵⁸⁷ In the hands of someone else, different examples from different experiences would be employed, giving this section a completely different appearance but with an underlying sense of landscape performance. This itself, the idea that there is an element of sameness in the differences between individuals, illustrates the specificity and universality that co-exist in the singular landscape relationship.

In the course of living and the everyday life, it would be imprudent to consider individuals contained in a bubble of rurality or urbanity. Categorical delineations like “urban” and “rural” that may have currency in the distinction of place and habitation⁵⁸⁸ are circumstantial to landscape action. Urban and rural are linked together by the ongoing performance of landscape. We move about gathering experiences that pour into the particularity of our own landscape and realities. From “town”, we do not forget

⁵⁸⁵ Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G.E.M. (trans.) (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (209).

⁵⁸⁶ E.g. Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge.

⁵⁸⁷ Cf. Levi-Strauss, C. (1970) *The Raw and the Cooked*, London, Harper & Row, p. 1. See also Herrington, S. (2004) ‘Cultivating A Canadian Cuisine’ in Horwitz, J. & Singley, P. (eds.) *Eating Architecture*, Boston, MIT Press, pp.33-51.

⁵⁸⁸ E.g. O’ Dowd, L. (1987) ‘Town and Country in Irish Ideology’, *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 13 (2), 43-53.

our experiences of “country”. We draw on experiences of town and country where prompted to produce a landscape reality; let that reality be dissatisfaction at the country in light of urban preference or vice-versa, landscape realities are formed in the communication of such categories. This idea is related to that of the urban planner Sir Ebenezer Howard who, in his seminal work *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, advocated that another alternative beyond either agricultural or industrial life could exist in which a combination of both could be lived by spontaneous movement between both. Explaining this idea with the analogy of a magnet, Howard considered town and country as two rival magnets. Idealistically, the rivalry of these forms of life would produce a third magnet drawing elements from both and free from the disadvantages of either individually.⁵⁸⁹

In day-to-day life I find I am given to movement between town and country. When I am in a town, I bring a sensibility that has me notice difference in details that is the reward of having been away for some time. It is the creative tension generated by distance. I feel there is an obviousness or immediacy about change in town that can be more subtle in a country setting. Each time I go I find something different. I often find shops painted in new colours, new shops opening or old ones closing down, buildings abandoned either decaying further or in the process of redevelopment. I find streets bearing different degrees and densities of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and the hustle and bustle of their sound. I find the language of landscape in a town is different from the country. There are different terms of reference and ways of articulating through talk of streets, suburbs, shopping centres and town centres, parks and greens, terraces and estates, detached or semi-detached houses, heavy or light traffic or factories for instance. Landscapes grow in different types of language and dialect.

I wonder if this experience is at the root of a curious phenomenon arising when I ask for directions from someone who, clearly knowing how to get around a place, often has the initial effect of making me more lost than I had been in the first place. I think

⁵⁸⁹ Howard, E. (1946) *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, London, Faber & Faber, p.14ff. See also Parsons, K.C. & Schuyler, D. (2002) *From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard*, Baltimore, John Hopkins Press.

communicating ways of knowing and the names and languages of particular landscapes illustrate their differences. In some ways, one must get more lost before finding a way into them. These differences are belied by a concomitant abstract sameness of landscape. Landscape is continual action and the ways in which we make realities are influenced by our mobilities. In my own case it is movement between urban and rural that shapes my sense of their reality individually. When I went to live in a town, my feelings on it coming from the country were reversed as I noticed more pronounced difference in the details of the country as a kind of reward for my return there.⁵⁹⁰

When I moved from the country to the town, one of the first things I did when I stepped out into the small garden of the house in which I was living was to take in the view. No matter where we are, we are presented with views and they are always different. In the garden, houses loomed to the back and high brown wooden fences stood a foot taller than myself on either side. Having spent most of my time in countryside it felt strange not being able to see very far. Ironically the closer I was to things, the further I felt from them. In countryside, the further away I was, in the sense I could take in vistas, the closer I felt. Initially I thought of Campbell's assertion that "In towns the furthest we see is the other side of the street...one's thought grows as space increases."⁵⁹¹ As time went on though, I changed and adapted to feel a closeness to the immediacy of the small garden and its tall fences. It encouraged me to think about why I sought out a view. I realised that seeking out a view was in the manner of my landscaping and how I was used to relating to land. I was always being directed to views and to share in the appreciation of seeing great distances. There was a valuable aesthetic to this in the outward range and the literal potential of length and breadth but I realised that land and I would have to agree on a different aesthetic in the back garden.⁵⁹²

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. Michael Viney who mentions this temporal tension that seeps into the spatiality of urban and rural difference when talking of going to town to buy a scythe or rather the components of a scythe, a difficult task since it was something no longer in common use. "It was these tokens of pastoral Ireland that I carried into confrontation with the lethal urban hardware of the 1980's." Viney, M. & Viney, E.(1981) *Another Life Again*, Dublin, The Irish Times, p.43

⁵⁹¹ Campbell, J. (1911) 'Space' in *Mearing Stones: Leaves from My Notebook on Tramp in Donegal*, Dublin, Maunsell and Company, p.10.

⁵⁹² The understanding of a landscape aesthetic here is based on Jay Appleton's (1975) idea of an aesthetic approach that is based fundamentally on asking "What is it that we like about landscape, and why do we

The back garden had its own aesthetic that was created in proximity rather than distance. In other words, the manner of my landscaping changed from seeking to look outward to looking at the inward specifics and details of what I could see in the immediacy of the garden. The garden and I made a new landscape. I was no longer concerned about seeing as far as I could but rather more concerned with seeing as closely as I could, appreciating things for their detail. Interpreting it thus, the landscape unconcealed itself so I can talk now of the green of the grass, the buttercups that gave it its own healthy hue or the track the dog had worn in the grass by running around. I can talk of the creeper that was growing up the fence, the way it blossomed in summer and the way its skeletal branches clung on in winter and the whistling draught I felt blowing through a small hole in the fence on windy days. I saw hedgehogs visit and cats play fast and loose with the patience of the dog. I saw and heard bees busily floating from flower to flower. I saw grass hoppers and heard their clicking. I saw dewy cobwebs that disappeared as the sun came up. I made tracks in the dewy grass and felt the dampness of leaves on the plants. I also saw plastic bags caught in the small tree, rustling in the breeze and the occasional empty beer bottle thrown carelessly away, sitting uselessly on the support of the green grass.

All these things and more besides were part of my landscape. A compromise on emphasis had begotten a new sense of reality. Perhaps the small garden broadened the scope of my landscape to a greater extent than a wide open expanse. The differences in proximity and distance were related to how I was landscaping rather than affecting what landscape was.⁵⁹³ Contrasted with this new found inward emphasis was the more

like it?" Appleton, J. (1975) *The Experience of Landscape*, Chichester, Wiley, p.xv. See also Appleton, J. (1979) *The Aesthetics of Landscape*, Oxford, The Landscape Research Group and Rural Planning Services Ltd. Cf. Muir, R. (1999) 'The Aesthetic Approach to Landscape' in Muir, R. *Approaches to Landscape*, London, Macmillan, pp. 244-270. See also Motloch, J. L. (2000) '1.4.10 Landscape as Aesthetic' in Motloch, J. L. *Introduction to Landscape Design*, Oxford, Wiley, pp.20-21.

⁵⁹³ Wylie (2007), in asserting tensions in landscape, argues for a tension in proximity/distance. This tension is based on the outward conceptual definition of landscape mainly as either the phenomenologically based idea of 'being-in-the-world' or the idea of landscape as something separate and distinct from the human. Wylie uses the example of Raymond Williams (1985) with his position that "the very idea of landscape implies separation and observation". As can easily be taken so far, this work is of the former belief. The tension of proximity/distance is thus redundant within this work and within the idea of landscape and landscape consciousness it develops. A similar tension Wylie (2007) posits is that of observation/inhabitation. The idea of landscape in this work is not associated with landscape precisely because of the sense of visual distance it implies. This is in the main due to the verbal action

familiar outward distanced view I had been more familiar with. I found this view from the height of upstairs windows. I had always lived in a bungalow and the two-storey provided a different visual that had me on a level with surrounding features in trees and houses.⁵⁹⁴ I took notice of this elevation because of my experience in the garden. I was partaking in a relationship of landscape according to elements beyond myself. I was forming and being formed by environment and this relationship found its expression in the details of a landscape reality. The house, myself and the garden became a jigsaw that fit together in different ways to make different realities.

There was a bus stop near the house in which I lived and from the house I could sometimes see people walking by and waiting. Now and again, they would get caught in rain and a gathering of brightly coloured umbrellas would shoot up like mushrooms. The bus would arrive and they would all disappear as though they were never there. In tune with the hum of a nearby factory I heard the noise of construction one day and looked to take in the beginnings of a bus shelter. Sure enough in a few days a bus shelter had grown up to change the landscape. It was a wonderful addition and of great benefit to those who had often been caught in downpours. Its blue frame reminded me of the blue hayshed I had once seen. I appreciated its value when I thought of how I had sometimes got caught in rain in the countryside. At such times I ludicrously thought how useful it would be to have a shelter and some sort of transport to come and bear one to the warm and dry indoors. Experiences grow into landscapes that transcend rural or urban. The manner or temperament of landscaping etches this kind of universality. Things in town reminded me of country as things in country reminded

potential of landscape or 'to landscape'. Observation is rather associated with nature and the sense that initial observation of nature gives birth to new landscape as the separation disintegrates via interpretation and environment. Coupled with this the sense of nature as noun and so divested of the activity that a verb implies, is more amenable to the idea of observation implying separation. However, beyond this work, such tension as outlined by Wylie may very well be a feature, perhaps necessarily so. Such tensions in the sense of broader scholarship are merely testament to the paradoxical character of landscape and, through communication, potentially indicative of its renewal and transformation. In landscape consciousness such an idea of separation and distance may well be more to do with how we landscape rather than what landscape is conceptually. The idea of observation and separation undoubtedly fits into the larger consciousness but not necessarily within landscape specifically which in this work is found more akin to articulation and shaping through movement and speech and less about tension than synthesis. See Wylie, J. (2007) *Landscape*, London, Routledge, pp.2-6. Also cf. Williams, R. (1973) *The Country and the City*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.126.

⁵⁹⁴ Cf. Aalen, F.H.A. (1997) 'Buildings' in Aalen, F.H.A., Whelan, K. & Stout, M. *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.145-180 (pp.163-164).

me of town. The circumstances of tension between both had me notice particular things to which I might not otherwise have paid any attention. The particularity of my circumstance informed the particularity of my landscapes.

Finding my way around town, I spoke of distinguishing features and land-marks. If there was a bookshop on the street I'd call it "the street with the bookshop" or "the bookshop street". To someone else it might be the "the street with the clothes shop" or "the clothes-shop street". It was rare that I knew the name of a street and so, this was the language of my landscape. I would landscape the same way on farms and among fields. Where there was a well I would call it "the well field"; where there was meadow I'd call it "the meadow field". Walking about town however as landscapes built up over time into place, people and signage communicated the names of streets and they gradually percolated into my speech. Landscape always finds its language if it is only to remark how it is unknown and strange.⁵⁹⁵

When I returned to the countryside, I noticed that the language of my landscape had changed. Perhaps the best example of this in my own case is the use of the word "gaff". It's a slang word for 'house' that I understand is of urban origin and perhaps most commonly associated with students.⁵⁹⁶ A few years ago, I noticed this new word popping up in informal conversation. Saying it back to myself in my mind, I immediately liked its sound and its brevity, much as I liked the superfluous lyricism of "e'er a". Compared to 'house', "gaff" seemed airier and lighter.⁵⁹⁷ It was a word that fitted comfortably in the flow of informal speech. Before I knew it, I noticed the

⁵⁹⁵ See Duffy, P. (2003) 'Change and Renewal in Issues of Place, Identity and the Local' in Hourihane, J. (ed.) *Engaging Spaces: People, Place and Space from an Irish Perspective*, Dublin, Lilliput Press, pp.13-30 (pp.15-16). "...we look essentially at local space as landscapes- of fields and farms, roads and houses, townlands and parishes and, indeed, as streets and neighbourhoods, named and claimed by local communities to make sense to them."

⁵⁹⁶ See for example McWilliams, D. (2008) *The Pope's Children: The Irish Economic Triumph and The Rise of Ireland's New Elite*, New Jersey, Wiley & Sons, "Gaff: a house", p.308. Cf. a more diverse history of the word in Partridge E. & Beale, P. (ed.) (2002) *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English Colloquialisms*, Routledge, London, p.440.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. Sopher, D.E. (1979) 'The Landscape of Home: Myth, Experience, Social Meaning', in Meinig, D.W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.129-153. Sopher talks about Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*, noting how "Gaston Bachelard writes about the poetic images of familiar friendly spaces, giving special attention to the house and experience of it in childhood. Reading it in the English translation, in which *la maison* of the original is rendered by the English word "house", we are left vaguely disquieted." p.130.

countryside was dotted with “gaffs”. Like “e’er a”, this word too has largely been elided from my expression, appearing now and again as a detail of my biography. The shape of my sentences shaped my language which in turn, shaped my landscape. Communication had passed on words that inveigled their way into my own everyday articulation of the world around me. As “gaff” disappeared, “house” re-emerged. Landscape is renewed in language through differing manners of observation, interpretation and articulation.

As we leave and return to landscapes they are restored and transformed. When I returned to the countryside I found views and broad horizons again. Before I had left for town I had taken them for granted, they were just everyday shapes of my land. I used to marvel at people who exclaimed at the view. Returning, I understood their perspective. The rich green of the grass appeared new, the amber hue of a well advanced barley crop looked fresh and different. Hearing the birds chirping, I thought of the blackbird who used to regularly hop about the shorn garden in town for feed. Hiding behind an apple tree, it grew ever less cautious as benefit outweighed risk. Strangely enough, living in town the birds reminded me of the countryside. Now, living in the countryside, the birds reminded me of town. Hearing the dominant sound of chirping birds, the quietness of my countryside was amplified. I had grown used to the whispering of noise in the town, low chatter and clatter of pedestrians, orchestras of engines in traffic, humming factories. For some, such sounds would be a discomfort, for me I was indifferent to the ambience, noticing it only in the stillness of fields and narrow roads. The complete darkness of a night-time without the warm, orangey glow of the street light was also strange. This was a new landscape and in time it would reform a sense of place.

9.2 Topping

Living in the countryside again, after a time ironically nostalgic for the “pavements grey” rather than “the bee loud glade”⁵⁹⁸, I remember commenting to someone that I

⁵⁹⁸ Referring to Yeats’ Lake Isle of Innisfree in which the speaker professed a romantic willingness to go to Innisfree and escape the grey pavements of London. Yeats, W.B., (1989) ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’ in *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*, R. J. Finneran (ed.) New York, Scribner Paperback Poetry, p.39.

would have to go home and do some topping. The weather had cleared up after a week's heavy rain. So as not to cut up the ground with the tractor, I had allowed the land to dry for another week after the rain had fallen. In this window, I was conscious of the need to get the job done because I did not know when it might start raining again. Relating this strategy to a friend, I was asked in response or, assumed I was asked, "What topping?" I then explained what topping had to be done and the fields most in need of it. It turned out I had been asked "What's topping?" It had never occurred to me that someone living in the countryside would not know what "topping" was. Embarrassed at my assumption I explained that topping involved cutting the tall grasses, thistles and weeds in order to thicken and enhance the good pasture grass. To do this, one generally used a tractor-mounted implement called a "topper". The topper's blades are set to cut at a specific height in order to save the lower pasture grass and cut the taller seeded grasses and weeds.

The implement I used to top the grass was known as a "fingerbar mower" (Fig. 9.1.). This is a machine with that descended from the old horse-drawn mowing machines. Indeed many of the horse-drawn machines were adapted for use with tractors when they became more popular. It appears quite old-fashioned beside some of the new flailing toppers but it holds a number of key advantages, particularly in rougher, stonier ground. It is a simplistic machine with a single long knife that appears like a row of perfectly triangular teeth. In the event of hitting a stone, the most damage likely to be caused is a broken "tooth" or section. These are easily and inexpensively replaced. It is a slow machine and compared with the modern topper it works differently. On the fingerbar mower the blade moves side to side as it moves through the grass. The modern topper has a number of whirring blades that spin at comparatively alarming speeds. Unlike the modern topper, the mower is an exposed machine in the sense that the blade is not covered over. This is of benefit on rough ground because the operator can see the track to be cut and quickly determine any potential obstructions. I saw this implement as ideal for topping and tailor-made for the particular nature of my task. So, it never occurred to me that it was actually made and used for a similar, arguably more important or at least more intense job.



Fig. 9.1. An example of a finger bar mower.

It was not until I had to explain the term “topping” to my friend that I thought about the name of the fingerbar mower. I wondered why it was called a mower and not a topper. I understood why it was called a fingerbar; with the long finger stretching out into the grass the name made sense. But terming it a mower seemed excessive or violent. It didn’t have much strength. It was a delicate, simple machine that would be easily broken if abusively treated. I had always known mowers as robust, strong and square implements. In fact, “implement” seems too weak a word. The mower was a machine in its own right that churned up heavy, thick meadow grass and spat it out into tidy straight rows. Mowers changed the look of a field from dense green to green and yellow stripes. I could never have imagined my fingerbar mower having done such a job. Its difference was comparatively minimal. A gentle rat-a-tat from the moving blade seemed to lay the cut grass carefully on the ground. It seemed almost apologetically cutting grass whereas the mowers I had known and seen at work in meadows over the years were positively eager to get stuck into the grass. Names and terms conjure up different senses and this is particularly so when we are prompted to reflect on them.

It was explained to me in conversation with someone else that the fingerbar mower was in fact used to cut corn as well as hay and with the addition of a grass board, it too would be able to line up the cut grass in rows for harvest. I looked out onto the meadow field and imagined cutting the grass with the fingerbar mower. I managed to get a sense of the scene while topping. The meadow suddenly seemed an altogether

easier-going place where the grass would fall lazily down, the grass board attachment gently ushering it into line. I had never realised it before but it was quite likely that years before my time, an implement the same as I was using now for a different job, was changing landscape in a different way for different people. Reading Frost's poem "Mowing" gave this another dimension when he talked of mowing with a scythe. Speaking to older people in my community, they talked of a similar experience. I tried to realise the feeling when a fingerbar mower first arrived into a meadow to cut grass, how people must have been excited and nervous about this machine getting the job done and not breaking down; people for whom making hay would be the make or break of a year standing in a shady corner with scythes at the ready to deputise. I considered someone driving into a meadow today to cut for hay or silage with a fingerbar mower; some excitable farmers would will it to a quick finish, complaining that it was too slow. When it first arrived in a field, clean and new the job, in startling contrast, most likely seemed done in the blink of an eye.⁵⁹⁹ How we move in landscape informs how we render its realities.

When I got to the end of topping the field I looked on the way the landscape had changed with this proud machine. The lines in the grass were fainter than that of a meadow. With the knowledge of the implement's potential, a palimpsest was revealed in its gentle etch on the surface. I saw meadows I had never seen before written on the rough ground. For all the times I had spent topping the fields, it was given a new dimension and a new importance by this machine. I took a pleasure in the easy-going rat-a-tat of the whispering mower blade. We'd move through these fields at our own pace, stop thistles and other weeds from spreading seeds and ruining the pasture and the meadow in the other field. The simple frame of the machine never changed but fitting into landscape it was part of something more than its nuts and bolts.

Nowhere was this better illustrated than when I finally broke the fingerbar mower. One year, after a particularly wet summer there was a large section of the field conquered by rushes. There were always a few rushes clumped about the field but this year they were particularly heavy. Earlier in the year, perhaps too early, I had topped the

⁵⁹⁹ E.g. Glassie, H. (2006) *The Stars of Ballymenone*, Indiana, University of Indiana Press, p.132.

same field and cut the rushes cleanly. But, after heavy rain and a lack of good drainage, a steady crop had sprouted again. Someone had said that they found it beneficial to cut the rushes around September or early autumn. This made sense to me so I resolved to cut the rushes again. For me, they spoiled the land and brought a difference that was not particularly welcome. With a helping hand I attached the trusty fingerbar mower and went to work. I immediately noticed the rushes were thicker and stronger than I had ever known them but I persisted nonetheless, thinking foolishly that they would resist cutting no differently than in other years. Sure enough, within four rounds of the field there was a loud cracking noise. The rushes had proven too much for the fingerbar mower. They had clogged up the machine and broken the connecting rod. This was the part of the machine that connected the knife to the rest of the machine. I had to stop, gather up the machine and bring it back to the yard. It would be easily repaired but with the benefit of this experience I was reminded that landscapes never remain the same in visible reality. What had worked before might not work again so I needed to find a different way to form a landscape free of rushes.

With that, I felt it was time for the “the heavy artillery”. I got a modern topper (fig. 9.2.) with its flailing, whirring blades and went out into the field and carefully set about topping the rushes. It was a decidedly more aggressive implement. It chewed up the rushes and spat them out. There was little of the quaint, clean cut “ratatat” rhythm of the fingerbar. Instead, there was an incessant whirring that left frayed stalks in its wake. The way it cut the grass was different. The field looked differently than when I had cut it before with the fingerbar mower. There were none of the lines that had told of past meadows. Though subtly so, this was the makings of a new landscape.



Fig. 9.2. An example of a modern grass topper.

This experience illustrates the manner in which landscapes change when understood as a relationship between human and land. It is not really related as something about myself or about the field but as something that draws us into something other than either of us individually. Any conceivable task, in this instance topping, connects humans to land and in the friction of its completion a landscape is formed. This, like all the other stories people have to tell, about going to work in the office, in the field, on the construction site, in any number of places, articulates a sense of reality through and in landscape. Each time I go into the field to top the grass, I see different stones, I see new weeds, I hear different sounds. I have and will continue to do the same job but each time I do it presents potential for difference. Some time I expect I'll break the machine on a stone having not noticed it. The land reveals itself in different ways as we reveal ourselves in the ways we live and work. Landscape is an expression and explanation of a collective self.

9.3 Meadows

Every year, hay or silage is made on most farms. The pulse of the countryside thumps a little louder at these times. The sounds of mowers and harvesters whirring in fields and tractors "flying" up and down roads bring a sense of urgency to the air. In summertime it is the main topic of conversation in fields and houses as people wonder if meadows are ready to be mown, speculating on machinery breakdowns and searching the sky for a potentially leaky cloud. The same thing happens every year with predictable unpredictability. No one knows for certain how things will have turned out by the end of the season.

The landscape changes in an obvious way at these times. As the meadow grows to the point of overgrown, its greenness is ruffled by the slightest wind. I notice this in attempts to avoid overgrown meadows for the sake of my dog Bran who is often prone to debilitating bouts of sneezing. I was made aware of this a few years ago when I walked by the edges of the meadow to get to another field. Bran, as any loyal dog might, followed me and as we were making our way through, the grass started sneezing violently. I was surprised to learn that dogs could suffer from hayfever. For his sake, I

disliked the countryside at these times. I dreamt of concrete and roads and the airiness of town.

The smell of grass and hay wafted with an unpleasant foreboding for myself and Bran. Consequently, I preferred the altogether quicker process of silage-making than the drawn out work of hay-making. Where silage could be mown one day and gathered up the next, hay needed more attention. After mowing, hay needed to be turned repeatedly. Essentially, this is scattering out the grass so that it can be aired and dried out until, with the aid of a good breeze and strong sun, it can be gathered in as sweet-smelling, crispy hay. This process would ideally take about a week. There was more of a gamble to be taken with hay than with silage owing to the length of time the grass spent outdoors. Everyone deals with this in their own way. Some are nervous about getting hay into the sanctuary of the shed or silage into the pit, worried that a black cloud full of ruinous rain will destroy everything. Some panic, some are tense, others are not nearly so intense and take what comes philosophically. If the hay or silage is made dry so much the better, if not, then it's not the end of the world. The meadow brings out the characteristics of the individual in a way few other fields do. In a most ostensible way realities change in the meadow not only year on year but also hour on hour as weather updates, speculation and conversation throw new perspectives on things.

I once heard someone commenting that cattle were given teeth for a good reason. By this it was meant that all the fuss and panic over harvesting lots of grass was unnecessary when the cattle could harvest most of it themselves if given the chance. I rather liked this idea. I was reminded of this in a year where stock levels were lower than normal and that in turn meant I harvested less grass. This had the effect of moving the meadow to a smaller field. Ruling out hay because the weather didn't seem overly trustworthy, I decided on in my opinion, the more convenient silage. As it turned out I would make something called "haylage". Apparently this is a cross between hay and silage that is made when grass is left a little longer than ordinarily for silage and a little shorter than ordinarily for hay. Before I was told about "haylage" the concept had never entered my mind. Another term and another possibility were revealed.

Nonetheless as it was, the new field grew its grass and drew a meadow's focus that it had never had. As with all dense and seeded grass meadows, I chose to keep the view a distant one for a dog who made it his business to go everywhere I went. At time of cutting, as usual in this different field, the lines of grass rowed up to give it its green and yellow livery. On the following day, the bright sun nearly dried out the silage too much but it was baled up into the "haylage" that it would become. With everything finished, it would be easy to say that the shorn yellow meadow fitted like a new patch in the land. With the fat black bales gathered in before the attack of ravenous crows and all safe and sound, the meadow was a glowing golden medal of accomplishment.⁶⁰⁰ The flurry of activity that had made a field a meadow and changed the shape of the land ceased to a more usual easy-going pace.

Within a few days the first shoots of new grass were beginning to show and within a few weeks, the field was verdant with rich, lush aftergrass. I got great satisfaction from letting the cattle out to graze it. Such was their delight in its sweetness that I couldn't help but stand a long time in their company watching them feast with satisfaction. I thought about the aftergrass that came after all the meadows over the years and the new, contrasting landscapes that grew up in the following days. The moment when I could watch the cattle move in the grass, tails shaking and heads nodding in telling satisfaction was the most rewarding. The field that was once a meadow, full of the tension of getting a harvest in was now making relaxed and happy cattle and a relaxed and happy farmer. For me, the meadow embodies a different reality after the work is done and the aftergrass reveals itself in new growth and novelty. Such experiences leave me to wonder if it is the case that we are not getting to know new things but rather knowing the same things in different ways. Knowing a meadow, a house, a street, a bog or a park occupies this idea of concealment and unconcealment. As the wheel turns we see different parts of it. Developing experience and knowledge usually have the result of revealing different facets and aspects of a thing that transform that thing in its entirety.

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. Whelan, K. (1997) 'The Modern Landscape: From Plantation to Present' in Aalen, F.H.A, Whelan, K & Stout, M. (eds.) *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.67-106 (p.102).

9.4 Bog

I remember travelling on a road through a bog a number of years ago.⁶⁰¹ In the passenger seat of the car and without the responsibility of driving I could easily look out the window and take in what was passing us by. At this time I was aware of the revelatory potential in the details of landscape. In the car, my experience was direct but in a different and altogether less nuanced sense.⁶⁰² On the road I thought of the stories the bog prompted and as I went through them I found I was glad that this was as close as I was getting to the bog. Hearing stories of the hard work the bog demanded as the price for a secure winter-shed full of turf didn't seem particularly appealing. Conversely, hearing other stories of the wonderful lunches and the satisfaction of a laden trailer, a full shed and a healthily flaming fire, I hoped I might find a sense of the detailed nuances in the character of the bog and the culture of harvesting or cutting turf.⁶⁰³ Sometimes driving along, one misses a great deal in environment.⁶⁰⁴ This may be opposed to the activity of walking which requires little in the way of conscious thought for its execution, allowing for wanderings of thought and a more direct landscape experience.⁶⁰⁵ In this respect there is an intellectual space or an intellectual freedom that is more readily opened up.⁶⁰⁶ It can grow out of falling into known or expected

⁶⁰¹ See Feehan, J. & O' Donovan, G. (1996) *The Bogs of Ireland: An Introduction to the Natural, Cultural and Industrial Heritage of Irish Peatlands*, Dublin, UCD Environmental Institute. See also Feehan, J., Mitchell, G.F., McElveen, S. & Tomlinson, R. (1997) 'Bogs' in Aalen, F.H.A., Whelan, K. & Stout, M. *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork, Cork University Press, pp.106-117. See Feehan *et al.* (1997) p.107 for a map detailing the distribution of bog types in Ireland. Cf. distribution of bogland in the natural regions of Ancient Leinster, see Smyth, A.P. (1982) 'Historical Atlas' in Smyth, A.P. *Celtic Leinster: Towards an Historical Geography of Early Irish Civilisation AD. 500-1600*, Dublin, Irish Academic Press, pp.139-159 (p.141).

⁶⁰² See Kamavisou, K. (2003) 'The Poetics of the Ordinary: Ambiance in the Moving Transitional Landscape' in Rose, G. & Dorrian, M. (eds.) *Deterritorialisations...Revisioning Landscapes and Politics*, London, Black Dog. pp.182-185. This is a very useful and insightful photo essay that explores journeying and the effect its means and method have on landscaping.

⁶⁰³ For a description of harvesting turf in the early 20th century see Campbell, J. (1911) 'Turf Cutting' in *Mearing Stones: Leaves from My Notebook on Tramp in Donegal*, Dublin, Maunsell & Company, pp.24-25. See Duffy, P.J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Dublin, Four Courts Press, pp.32-33.

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Ó'Grianna, S. & Hughes, A.J. (trans.) *Nuair a Bhí Mé Óg*, Dublin, A & A Farmar. Ó'Grianna talks of the time when in the late 19th/early 20th century he was driving a cow on the road. The responsibility of driving the cow meant: "I kept looking all around me on my way eastwards, and many's the wonderful sight I saw. But I could not get a proper look at them as I walked along." p.38.

⁶⁰⁵ Lorimer, H. (2010) 'Walking: new forms and spaces for studies of pedestrianism', in Cresswell, T. and Merriman, P. (eds.) *Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces and Subjects*, London, Ashgate.

⁶⁰⁶ This is an idea that may also be seen in work and how different types of work, particularly those of a more mundane nature, allow a greater degree of intellectual freedom in the wandering mind at work. This

rhythms. This is especially true of running and the metronomic pace that can allow the mind to wander around.

Passing through a bog by whatever means, at a fundamental level I am most struck by the telegraph poles and the way they lean away from the road. In some cases they look as though they are about to fall, hanging on for dear life to the wire they pass along. Oftentimes the road we are travelling on seems to have taken on a convex curve, tapering off slightly at the outer edges into the peaty bog. The open flat plain of the bog with the road sitting on top of it contrasts greatly with the roads and motorways set deep down between high sheer banks elsewhere. The brown of the bog is sometimes warm looking in the heat and light of the sun when it seems to lose the heaviness of its colour. More often under rainy clouds, it seems cold and dank. This is particularly so when viewed through a window dappled with rain. At such times it is difficult to envisage it getting to the stage of making a warm and cosy fire. In less intensively harvested parts of bogs, I can often see fresh sods of turf lined up into rows and columns in the different shades of sedge and grass.⁶⁰⁷

On one particular day, a flat tyre forced us to stop the car. With the wheel changed we stood for a moment to feel the tactile openness. The sense of stillness contrasted with the almost flipbook animation from a passing car. In the distance I saw people heading for home having gathered up a load of turf. A satisfied puff of smoke from the tractor's exhaust seemed to resemble the relief felt at getting their turf home and dry. Inside and outside a car, different landscapes reveal themselves. Had we not stopped the car by the road I would not have heard a curlew's call away across the bog and had I not been in the company of someone familiar with the sound, I would not have been aware of what I had heard. Hearing the call on its own, I would have associated the distinctive sound with the bog and perhaps commented on the sound of "a bird". Instead, a layer of knowing clothed a new apparent reality in the bog.

is something well illustrated by novels like Alan Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*. Sillitoe, A. (1958) *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, Middlesex, Plume. Cf. also Anderson, B. (2004) 'Time-stilled, space-slowed: How boredom matters', *Geoforum*, 35, 739-754.

⁶⁰⁷ On the many-layered natures and cultures of the bog see the detailed and revelatory Foss, P. & O'Connell, C. (1997) 'Bogland: Study and Utilization' in Wilson Foster, J. (ed.) *Nature in Ireland: A Scientific and Cultural History*, Dublin, Lilliput Press, pp.184-199.

In many ways, roads become lines of time, passing along them on foot, horseback, pony and trap, car, bus and whatever technology the future holds. They are veins that allow us into environed spaces that themselves gather momentum in the collective synergy of human and land. The way we move through nature, environment and landscape forms and reforms it. In the same way we can take the road many times and each time see something different. Practically, in changing landscape realities there cannot be right or wrong. There are always new landscapes to be cultivated in the literal and metaphorical layers of the bog.⁶⁰⁸ Should I pass through the bog again perhaps some of these revelations will make themselves apparent, drawing something known from all that is unknown.

Of “something” no more can be said, for the same story can appear in potentially infinite ways. As Henry Glassie writes, “[n]o single account, oral or written could be perfectly true. People nod, forget, make mistakes.”⁶⁰⁹ In the ambiguities of imperfection there can be no real conclusion and so our landscapes thrive in the ongoing friction of tensions and the differences of particularities.

⁶⁰⁸ This is materially and historically and, possibly culturally, illustrated in the guise of bog oak which can be seen occasionally in gardens around the country, placed there for their natural aesthetic appeal. Cf. Heaney, S. (1972) ‘Bog Oak’ in *Wintering Out*, London, Faber & Faber: “a cobwebbed, black, long seasoned rib”. p.14; Appendix p.284.

⁶⁰⁹ Glassie, H. (2006) *The Stars of Ballymenone*, Indiana, Indiana University Press, p.129.

Conclusion

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.
- William Blake - 'Auguries of Innocence'⁶¹⁰

The core belief at the heart of this thesis is the feeling in a common pattern underlying different articulations of the same idea. As the single idea may never be manifest in plain sight as it were, and the different articulations of a landscape are all we really have to go on to reveal an implicit common pattern, the thesis is one that comes to terms with irresolution. All the different articulations, of which there are infinite possibilities, each in their own way give expression to the single idea of a landscape relationship. This concluding part is mindful of landscape as something that is paradoxically the same but different. Thus, like landscape itself, it may appear more enigmatic than conclusive. This is necessary so as to convey the quality of perpetual inconclusiveness. In the vein of the previous part, I will continue to relate these ideas through my own experience. Firstly, I will discuss my experiences picking stones in a field. Each year I did the same job, but the experience was invariably a different one, if only in the smallest way. Secondly, I will discuss as a means of analogy, my experiences relating to a river or more accurately, a stream not far from where I live. This is to underline a consubstantial sameness and difference in landscape that defies complete resolution, but in its defiance thrives and develops in different manners of form.

I remember as a child going about a field picking stones. Each year, the ground seemed to sprout stones. I would remember the previous year having gone around by the edges of the field and clearing it.⁶¹¹ Each year however, there were new stones. I often wondered where all the stones had come from. So it stood that here I was in the field again, my arms full of stones and my carrying them to a safe hole in the ditch. Walking along, eyes focused on the ground, I noticed a piece of metal that had been

⁶¹⁰ Blake, W. 'Auguries of Innocence', in Blake, W. & Stevenson, W.H. (ed.) (1971) *The Poems of William Blake*, Harlow: Longman, p. 145ff.

⁶¹¹ Cf. Heaney's (1972) 'Cairn-Maker': "He robbed the stone's nests, uncradled/As he orphaned and betrothed rock/To Rock." Heaney, S. (1972) 'Cairn-Maker' in Heaney, S. *Wintering Out*, London, Faber & Faber, p.50.

moulded for some purpose as yet unknown to me. It didn't look to be a part of any machinery I was familiar with. It had a rusty appearance but was far from rotten. I left it by the gate and thought I'd bring it back to see if anyone could enlighten me.

When I had finished going about the field I picked up the piece of metal and brought it back with me. I was quickly told that it was a plough sock. I have since heard others refer to it as a plough share. It is a steel-pointed covering that is fitted at the tip of a board. I had never known ploughing to have taken place in that field until my find. Like the layers of the bog, the field too has its layers. Each year it throws up stones and now and again, the odd lost treasure is revealed. I considered this a great find indeed though it was an old plough sock and quite useless. I suppose it did not end up at the edge of a field without reason. Nevertheless it had a new value in the way it revealed new detail out of old and made a womb of its tomb.⁶¹² Where once this field may have been known as a ploughfield and since forgotten, the sod was turned on this old landscape, it was restored to knowledge and transformed my landscape. The field and I were reconnected in a new landscape reality. Not only did it open possibilities but there was less of the chore about picking stones in the field since one never knew what one might come across.

Days of industrious ploughing blossomed in my imagination when I found the ploughshare and the land was shaped with enormous men at the control of a plough and horse, head down in an onward march, a seam of dark brown clay in their wake, stopping only at such time when someone came into the field with tea. I imagined them drinking it and looking to the sky in search of some telling sign of weather before turning to work again. It was in such landscapes that I would find special significance in Seamus Heaney's poem 'Follower':

My father worked with a horse plough,
His shoulders globed like a full sail strung
Between the shafts and the furrow.

⁶¹² Cf. Shakespeare, W., Booth, S. (1977) (ed.) 'Sonnet 86' in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p.75. I am reminded of this turn of phrase because the margin for discovery and continued dormancy are held in a moment that can bring about revelation just as easily as it cannot; appendix, p. 301.

The horses strained at his clicking tongue.

An expert. He would set the wing
And fit the bright-pointed sock.
The sod rolled over without breaking.
At the headrig, with a single pluck

Of reins, the sweating team turned round
And back into the land. His eye
Narrowed and angled at the ground,
Mapping the furrow exactly.

I stumbled in his hobnailed wake,
Fell sometimes on the polished sod;
Sometimes he rode me on his back
Dipping and rising to his plod.
I wanted to grow up and plough,
To close one eye, stiffen my arm.
All I ever did was follow
In his broad shadow around the farm.

I was a nuisance, tripping, falling,
Yapping always. But today
It is my father who keeps stumbling
Behind me, and will not go away.⁶¹³

We follow our landscapes to the discovery of their reality and from there, history follows us in an ongoing cycle. On discovery and its discourse, Peter Jackson contextualises the idea using the example of Carter.⁶¹⁴ Carter argues that linguistic convention illustrates the colonisation of Australia as movement on a stage, an acted out process that draws on suitably historical or perhaps theatrically historical traditions. Illustrating the point, he cites the example of Clark describing the first fleet landing at Botany Bay in terms that deliberately or not, evoke the Latin poet Virgil's description of the founding of Carthage.⁶¹⁵ The use of the word 'description' illustrates the distance

⁶¹³ Heaney, S. (1966) 'The Follower' in *Death of a Naturalist*, London, Faber, pp. 24; appendix, p. 282.

⁶¹⁴ Jackson, P. (1989) 'The Politics of Language' in *Maps of Meaning*, London, Routledge, pp.155-170 (p.167). See Carter, P. (1987) *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History*, London, Faber & Faber.

⁶¹⁵ E.g. Virgil, West, D. (trans.) (1990) *Aeneid*, London: Penguin. The passage Carter (1987) quotes is evocative of the zealous industry of the colonial project. With the same goals, it is easy to see the relevance and usefulness in expressing the British colonial enterprise. "Eagerly the Tyrians press on, some to build walls, to rear the citadel, and roll up stones by hand; some to choose the site for a dwelling and enclose it with a furrow." The remainder of the passage is arguably even more illustrative: "Here some are digging harbours, here others lay the deep foundations of their theatre and hew out of the cliffs vast columns, fit adornments for the stage to be. Even as bees in early summer, amid flowery fields, ply

and objectivity of the enterprise and the mores of its realisation. In other words cues are taken from traditions and practices that seem to guide us in the way we express ourselves. We seek examples of how things were and are done and these observances leave a trail of words in their wake, reminding us of connections made and the necessity, and indeed actuality, of communication. In my own case, while walking the field in search of stones I came across a ploughshare. Not knowing what it was I sought explanation and understanding, finding those things in communication, I also found example and illustration manifest in Heaney's poem "The Follower". Following loose stones, I found a ploughshare and now that experience follows me in the prompts of circumstance.

We seek to know and communicate the world around us, to shape the land in which we find ourselves a part. To achieve this we look to language and thought, we look to tradition, manner and means as guides. In the benign tensions that arise with our own individual and personal experiences and those of others and those of different places and lands we find expression, a middle voice that lets us tell our own story and that story may be shared with others so that we might give and receive examples and explanations articulated through our words and actions. These then may have the effect of shaping our land anew in the transformation of its discoveries.

Jackson wrote that "a revitalised cultural geography must go beyond the mapping of languages and the geography of dialect, towards the study of language itself as the medium through which intersubjective meaning is communicated."⁶¹⁶ Throughout this work and culminating in this chapter, I have sought to distil and express a middle voice between human and land, illustrated by the example of myself and my land. By the concentric waves of landscape given sound in language and articulation, landscape is communicated and shared to be renewed and transformed. In the movement and

their task in sunshine, when they lead forth the full-grown young of their race, or pack the fluid honey and strain their cells to bursting with sweet nectar, or receive the burdens of incomers, or in martial array drive from their folds the drones, a lazy herd; all aglow is the work and the fragrant honey is sweet with thyme." *Aeneid*, 1.418ff. As an example of the different ways flora and fauna may be read, consider how bees and insects act as metaphors and symbolism of empire. See Hollingsworth, C. (2001) *Poetics of the Hive: The Insect Metaphor in Literature*, Iowa, University of Iowa Press.

⁶¹⁶ Jackson (1989) op cit. p. 169.

expression of landscape it is neither human nor land that matters but rather the relationship between them. This work could not be written without land nor could it be written without human. Landscape is a relationship and a status, establishing itself and thriving in a middle ground inclusive of sameness and difference, individual and community, nature and culture and subject and object. Field experience is integral to its realization.

Field experience and fieldwork goes beyond the visual however and calls on a more complete sensory involvement. One such example that comes to my mind is the case of the stream near where I live. I don't often see the stream but on days after a heavy fall of rain, I can easily know it's there by the sound of its flow. I remember the first time I heard it. I wondered from where this noise was coming. By its noise, the stream sounded like a river and much more impressive, insofar as volume and magnitude are impressive, than the usual trickling brook. Sometimes the flow was so slight, its sound so faint that to call it a stream would seem a delusion of grandeur. I often used to call it a drain. Terming it a "stream" seemed a happy compromise between its potential for voicing both rush and stillness. More often than not the stream courses a path somewhere between these extremes.

The stream is an outward voice for the network of drains that are threaded together beneath the surface of the fields. The water invisibly organises itself into expression. The network of drains that run through fields can often be seen beneath the surface. Much like ridges under the skin of grassland tell of days digging potatoes or sowing crops, the gently settled line in the grass tells of tracks pressed into the ground, of stones built and pipes lain to carry water. Before such drains and shores were laid the stream sounded different. It most likely did not have the same rushing force. Its sound was probably different without the contribution of drains and hidden shores. Had such drains not been dug I might never have heard the stream and been prompted to look for it, to see its dimensions and factor it into a reality. Without knowledge of the stream I might not have noticed the gentle track in the grass or in noticing it, I might not have known what it was. Circumstance and the synchronicity of sense guide us to new landscape. Each day the stream sounds different and each day landscape changes.

Getting to know the stream and its hidden network is a process of unconcealment. I had noticed tracks in the grass before that were clearly imprinted by design. Not knowing what they were, I asked and was told they were the mark of “shores”. I wondered what “shores” were and I was told they were trenches dug and filled back in with stone and piping. In times past, they were often built box-like with larger flagstones. The built water way was filled back in to blend relatively seamlessly with the surrounding grassland a faint tell-tale scratch on the grassland the only indication of its presence. I never thought to ask where the water went once it was guided through the shore until the stream told me with its flowing water. Discovery of the stream subtly changed the landscape as it became apparent that there was more going on than I could see. I wondered about the name of the stream but no one seemed to have one. Perhaps a definite “*the* stream” rather than an indefinite “*a* stream” was enough. The voice of landscape develops and ultimately requires a level of progressive understanding and explanation.⁶¹⁷ It is a connection that weaves human and land into a sort of panpsychism. Human is as relevant as land in landscaping.⁶¹⁸

Along networks of communication that run through and between individuals and land, new landscape is revealed. Knowing the stream transformed things. There was another feature threaded into pre-existing landscapes. Whenever I hear talk of an idyllic

⁶¹⁷ See the example of Sylvia Plath’s ‘Black Rook in Rainy Weather’. Her use of words such as “wet”, “rain” and “desultory” contrast strikingly with words like “fire”, “light”, “incandescent” and “burning”. For the speaker of the poem there is a hope of escaping neutrality in the potential and possibility of landscape. “I only know that a rook/ Ordering its black feathers can so shine/ As to seize my senses, haul/ My eyelids up, and grant/ A brief respite from fear/ Of total neutrality.” As we have seen with Heaney and Wordsworth in particular there is almost a fear of feeling and sensing nothing. If by some turn of feather or some play of light, some words might assemble so landscaping might have some meaning, that there may be progression beyond interpretations and environment. The speaker needs something “To set the sight on fire /In my eye.” In the third stanza of the poem, the speaker admits “I desire, / Occasionally, some backtalk/ From the mute sky”. Ironically, the speaker is expressing landscape and thus the intimacy, in the basic sense of a relationship that comes with its articulation, but it is not enough. For now the speaker will have to be satisfied with what there is. “Trekking stubborn through this season /Of fatigue, I shall/ Patch together a content/ Of sorts.” There is always possibility however illustrated by her adding “Miracles occur.” Plath, S. (1960) ‘Black Rook in Rainy Weather’ in *The Colossus*, London, W. Heinemann, p.77. Cf. Gill, J. (ed.) (2006) *The Cambridge Companion to Plath*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

⁶¹⁸ See Keller, C. ((1994) ‘The Theoretical Aspects of Landscape Study’ in Collins, T. (ed.) *Decoding the Landscape*, University College Galway, Centre for Landscape Studies, pp.79-99: p.82.

“babbling brook” I think of the stream that talks to us about the weather.⁶¹⁹ Sometimes working in the field one might stand still and call whoever else is there to stand still so that they might hear its voice. As the hydrology of water goes in cycles, landscapes too go in cycles. They are washed away to be renewed by a curiously familiar novelty. Like the drains and shores that feed into the stream, all things merge into one and landscape emerges. In a way we only see the river for a moment as it’s passing through but its sounds reverberate much longer.⁶²⁰ The words hidden under the bed of the stream and beneath the grass have a habit of drawing us to somewhere we don’t know. In the complacency of knowing regularity and everyday goings-on, they have a habit of surprising us with their unconcealment. One cannot know everything there is to know about a particular landscape or a place, one might come close but there is always the potential of a reveal, of something that can transform and reorganise everything we thought we knew.⁶²¹

Thinking about it now, I thought I knew all there was to know about the stream. I knew where it rose, the path it took and where it ended up. Passing by one day, I saw someone fishing in the stream. I remember laughing and thinking that there were no fish to be caught in the stream. Talking to the “fisherman” I asked him what he was hoping to catch. He answered that he was “just looking for ‘Pincíns’ to pass the

⁶¹⁹ The relevance of Frost’s poetic abstract of the “sound of sense” is especially relevant in such cases. The idea of a babbling brook commonly evokes a sort of pastoral calmness or gentleness. The sound of the stream I have heard provoked quite a similar sense of gentleness after the rush of rainfall.

⁶²⁰ Heraclitus of Ephesus proposed that everything is in motion and that nothing remains the same. Thus he claimed that “The river where you set your foot just now is gone – those waters giving way to this, now this.” Critics of Heraclitus took issue with this claiming that one can in fact put one’s foot in the same river twice since appearances may change but the underlying reality remains the same. As with landscape, we are doing the same thing in the conceptual idea of landscaping but the way in which we do it is often different. See Haxton, B. (trans.) (2003) *Heraclitus: Fragments*, London: Penguin, (41) As well as water, Heraclitus had the idea that fire symbolised change. Unrelated directly to Heraclitus, Spirr (1998) talks expressively and eloquently of fire and the burning process of change that was illustrated in the fires of Orange County, California in the early 1990’s. Spirr, A. W. (1998) *The Language of Landscape*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p. 86ff. The foundations of change are laid in the elemental make up of material. Air, Water, Earth and Fire make and change land and by extension of human participation, landscape.

⁶²¹ On a similar note see Bernard Lassus’ Successive Ambiances 13 project in which a structure was built to convey an experience that “reveals that a volume can appear smaller than the volume it contains.” Lassus, B. (1968) ‘Successive Ambiances 13’ in Lassus, B. (1998) *The Landscape Approach*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, pp.21-22. For myself, the stream was built on a reality derived from appearances. As the appearance changed, so too did the reality of the stream and thus, the reality of landscape.

time.”⁶²² I was surprised because I didn’t know that there were any lifeforms worth fishing for in the stream. Sure enough, a jar full of water was shortly produced containing three “Pincíns”. Not only had I not known there were such things in the stream, I also did not know until then what “Pincíns” were. They turned out to be tiny minnows. Having examined them in the jar we released them fluttering back into the stream, taking a landscape with them, another circle having turned in its ongoing revelation.

Like the river banks, certainties too are deposited and eroded as landscapes turn through the faintest ripple or the strongest wave. In summation, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, there is no accord in how we landscape as there is no conflict in what we are doing.⁶²³ Drawing together creative paradoxes is the strength and sustenance of landscape as primarily relationship and symbiosis. This understanding is at the core of landscape consciousness, allowing us to see the infinity of verb in noun or as Blake would put it, “to hold infinities in the palms of our hands and eternities in hours.”⁶²⁴ In the balance of landscape, invisible form is known through the details of visible manner. As geographers we are uniquely placed through a balance of concept and fieldwork, to apply this idea of landscape in our everyday professional and personal lives.⁶²⁵ It is the beauty of geography that the quotidian⁶²⁶, ordinary and mundane happenings of the

⁶²² For a look at Irish terms such as “Pincín” and their currency in modern Hiberno-English, see Uí Fhallúin, R. (1989) ‘Tá Me Dúidín in Me Dorn agus Tá Me Dorn Dúnta’ in *Clonown - The history, traditions and culture of a South Roscommon Community*, Clonown, Clonown Community Centre Committee.

⁶²³ “This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything could be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here.” Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell, (201) Cf. Kripke, S.A. (1982) *Wittgenstein On Rules and Private Language: An Elementary Exposition*, Oxford, Blackwell.

⁶²⁴ Blake, W. (1971) ‘Auguries of Innocence’, in Blake, W, & Stevenson, W.H. (ed.) *The Poems of William Blake*, Harlow, Longman, p. 145ff.

⁶²⁵ Cf. Daniels, S. & Nash, C. (2004) ‘Lifepaths: Geography and Biography’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 30, 449-458.

⁶²⁶ That is if we understand beauty in the sense of St. Thomas Aquinas’ idea of it; beauty as a composite of wholeness, harmony and radiance. See Eco, U. (1988) ‘The Formal Criteria of Beauty’ in Eco, U., Bredin, H. (trans.) *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, Boston, Harvard University Press, pp. 64-122. Cf. James Joyce’s idea of epiphany as an understanding of what Aquinas meant in Joyce, J., Spencer, T. (ed.) (1969) *Stephen Hero: part of the first draft of ‘A portrait of the artist as a young man’*, London, Cape, p.213. Beauty as epiphany may be read into the momentary manifestation of the landscape product, a moment of articulated clarity in ongoing process that ultimately renders the moment an attempt. Cf. Lefebvre, H., Moore, J. (trans.) (2002) ‘The Theory of Moments’ in *Critique of Everyday Life Volume II: Foundations for a Sociology of the Everyday*, London, Verso, pp.340-359.

experienced life foster a collective sensibility that can transcend the distinctions of private and professional.⁶²⁷ As Michael Viney has written of his experience having moved from suburban Co. Dublin to a remote part of Co. Mayo, “[t]he flux, the flow, the drifting balance of our days needs a particular kind of patience.”⁶²⁸

This thesis has sought to distil a functional sense of landscape in both abstract form and functional manner. It has turned the dilemma of choice regarding landscape as either representational product or performed process, into a creative necessity for the inclusion of both ways of knowing. The route it has taken from a basic understanding of the idea that landscape is text, has seen this thesis itself mirror a landscape relationship, opening up a way of understanding landscape in its form and manner. The performance of the thesis, moving through the processes of observation, interpretation and articulation draw out a general, abstract sense of what landscape is as well as how it might be performed. This is an approach built around the idea of a phenomenological reality and the way the world appears; an appearance that masks an essential form.⁶²⁹ The relationship of landscape is one built in the space or distance between its constituents, generally speaking human and land or concomitant categorisations of culture and nature. As the relationship progresses, that space or gap is filled by the creation of a landscape product. The apparent product that is created though is never final and absolute. There is always the potential for renewal and transformation and this is powered by the ongoing experience of living. The landscape product that makes itself apparent as the particular articulation of a particular relationship sees it an expression of manner and most pointedly, a particular manner. There is a generality or universality in an abstract form. It is towards the abstract form that the articulated manner attempts. The particular expression gives clues to an underlying universality and there is tension here as well, since the particular can never fully embody the universal.

⁶²⁷ Cf. Lorimer, H. & Spedding, N. (2002) ‘Editorial: Putting Philosophies of Geography into Practice’, *Area*, 34(3), pp.227-228. “Without these social processes of doing and being, the geography that we recognize, and ultimately authenticate through published accounts in journal papers and textbooks, would not exist; yet we seldom subject such quotidian behaviour to sustained scrutiny.” p.227.

⁶²⁸ Viney, M. (1996) *A Year's Turning*, Belfast, Blackstaff Press, p.xxvii.

⁶²⁹ Cf. De Saint-Exupéry, A. (1943) *The Little Prince*, New York, Harcourt, p.72. “It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

This is an approach to landscape that helps to co-ordinate it has something that may embody the traits of representation as well as performance or in the linguistic terms through which it is distilled, the traits of a noun as well as a verb. In the terms of a landscape relationship that this work has developed, landscape embodies form as well as manner. This is an alternative to an either/or approach. This thesis has demonstrated the capabilities of landscape to embody both states concurrently and in doing so has explored how they might interact. The motif of a relationship sees human and land, or culture and nature come together to create something beyond themselves. They each retain their respective identities but in terms of the process of a landscape relationship they define something else in the product of that relationship. The tensions and the frictions of distance are negotiated into a balanced, albeit temporary result since there is no factually right or wrong way of doing landscape. The completeness of a universal form, unlike the completeness of a particular manner, is beyond the appearance of everyday life.

Embracing the ultimately irreconcilable character of a landscape relationship and opening up the issue to a question of opinion as well as fact, helps with epistemology or ways of knowing landscape as both representational abstract form and performed, enacted manner. This demonstrates how we can come to know what landscape is in more general ontological terms.⁶³⁰ This thesis has run from seeking an idea of landscape in the general sense of a concept and its use, to ways in which that general idea might be found in the example of other performances. Finally, taking ownership of the concept, it has moved to the living performance of the general form in a particular meaningful manner. In many ways this has been a personal journey taken through the context of a wider universality. In another example of landscape as relationship, its use is shown to mean something and its meaning is shown to be of use. The idea of landscape cultivated in this thesis is accepting and thriving upon an element of irreconcilability and the essential use of distance in a relationship as creative. Creative of a general self in terms of particular process and product, landscape is recursive. The infinite potential of particular stories told in the billowing distance between human and

⁶³⁰ E.g. Low, D. (2000) *Merleau-Ponty's Last Vision: A Proposal for the Completion of the Visible and the Invisible*, Illinois, Northwestern University Press.

land attempt at the perfect form in imperfect ways. As with Burke's warning that a society without the means of change is a society without the means of its self-preservation⁶³¹, the means of change in the continual attempt of a particular manner towards a generalised form is the means of landscape's self-preservation.

⁶³¹ E.g. Burke, E., Turner, M. (ed.) (1790; 2003) *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p.19

Appendix: Full Content of Poems Discussed in the Main Text

(i) William Wordsworth

It was an April Morning Fresh and Clear.

IT was an April morning: fresh and clear
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
The steps of June; as if their various hues
Were only hindrances that stood between
Them and their object: but, meanwhile, prevailed
Such an entire contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
With which it looked on this delightful day
Were native to the summer.--Up the brook
I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.
At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
Which I till then had heard, appeared the voice
Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the lamb,
The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,
Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here;
But 'twas the foliage of the rocks--the birch,
The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
With hanging islands of resplendent furze:
And, on a summit, distant a short space,
By any who should look beyond the dell,
A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
"Our thoughts at least are ours; and this wild nook,
My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."

---Soon did the spot become my other home,
My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

(from *Poems on the Naming of Places*, 1800)

(ii) Robert Frost

Mowing

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound—
And that was why it whispered and did not speak.
It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:
Anything more than the truth would have seemed too weak
To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows,
Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
(Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.
My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

(from *A Boy's Will*, 1913)

Mending Wall

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun,
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors'.
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder

If I could put a notion in his head:
'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows?
But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me~
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors'.

(from *North of Boston*, 1914)

After Apple Picking

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.
But I am done with apple-picking now.
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight
I got from looking through a pane of glass
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough
And held against the world of hoary grass.
It melted, and I let it fall and break.
But I was well
Upon my way to sleep before it fell,
And I could tell
What form my dreaming was about to take.
Magnified apples appear and disappear,
Stem end and blossom end,
And every fleck of russet showing clear.
My instep arch not only keeps the ache,
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.

And I keep hearing from the cellar bin
The rumbling sound
Of load on load of apples coming in.
For I have had too much
Of apple-picking: I am overtired

Of the great harvest I myself desired.
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.
For all
That struck the earth,
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
Went surely to the cider-apple heap
As of no worth.
One can see what will trouble
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.
Were he not gone,
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.

(from *North of Boston*, 1914)

To Earthward

Love at the lips was touch
As sweet as I could bear;
And once that seemed too much;
I lived on air

That crossed me from sweet things,
The flow of--was it musk
From hidden grapevine springs
Downhill at dusk?

I had the swirl and ache
From sprays of honeysuckle
That when they're gathered shake
Dew on the knuckle.

I craved strong sweets, but those
Seemed strong when I was young;
The petal of the rose
It was that stung.

Now no joy but lacks salt,
That is not dashed with pain
And weariness and fault;
I crave the stain

Of tears, the aftermark
Of almost too much love,
The sweet of bitter bark
And burning clove.

When stiff and sore and scarred
I take away my hand
From leaning on it hard
In grass and sand,

The hurt is not enough:
I long for weight and strength
To feel the earth as rough
To all my length.

(from *New Hampshire*, 1923)

(iii) Seamus Heaney

Digging

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.

Under my window a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade,
Just like his old man.

My grandfather could cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, digging down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.

(from *Death of a Naturalist*, 1966)

Blackberry Picking

Late August, given heavy rain and sun
For a full week, the blackberries would ripen.
At first, just one, a glossy purple clot
Among others, red, green, hard as a knot.
You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet
Like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for
Picking. Then red ones inked up and that hunger
Sent us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots
Where briars scratched and wet grass bleached our boots.
Round hayfields, cornfields and potato-drills
We trekked and picked until the cans were full
Until the tinkling bottom had been covered
With green ones, and on top big dark blobs burned
Like a plate of eyes. Our hands were peppered
With thorn pricks, our palms sticky as Bluebeard's.
We hoarded the fresh berries in the byre.
But when the bath was filled we found a fur,
A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache.
The juice was stinking too. Once off the bush
The fruit fermented, the sweet flesh would turn sour.
I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair
That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.
Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.

(from *Death of a Naturalist*, 1966)

The Diviner

Cut from the green hedge a forked hazel stick
That he held tight by the arms of the V:
Circling the terrain, hunting the pluck
Of water, nervous, but professionally
Unfussed. The pluck came sharp as a sting.
The rod jerked with precise convulsions.
Spring water suddenly broadcasting
Through a green hazel its secret stations.
The bystanders would ask to have a try.
He handed them the rod without a word.
It lay dead in their grasp till, nonchalantly,
He gripped expectant wrists. The hazel stirred.

(from *Death of a Naturalist*, 1966)

Follower

My father worked with a horse plough,
His shoulders globed like a full sail strung
Between the shafts and the furrow.
The horses strained at his clicking tongue.

An expert. He would set the wing
And fit the bright-pointed sock.
The sod rolled over without breaking.
At the headrig, with a single pluck.

Of reins, the sweating team turned round
And back into the land. His eye
Narrowed and angled at the ground,
Mapping the furrow exactly.

I stumbled in his hobnailed wake,
Fell sometimes on the polished sod;
Sometimes he rode me on his back
Dipping and rising to his plod.
I wanted to grow up and plough,
To close one eye, stiffen my arm.
All I ever did was follow
In his broad shadow around the farm.

I was a nuisance, tripping, falling,
Yapping always. But today
It is my father who keeps stumbling
Behind me, and will not go away.

(from *Death of a Naturalist*, 1966)

Bogland

for T. P. Flanagan

We have no prairies
To slice a big sun at evening--
Everywhere the eye concedes to
Encrouching horizon,

Is wooed into the cyclops' eye
Of a tarn. Our unfenced country
Is bog that keeps crusting
Between the sights of the sun.

They've taken the skeleton
Of the Great Irish Elk
Out of the peat, set it up
An astounding crate full of air.

Butter sunk under
More than a hundred years
Was recovered salty and white.
The ground itself is kind, black butter

Melting and opening underfoot,
Missing its last definition
By millions of years.
They'll never dig coal here,

Only the waterlogged trunks
Of great firs, soft as pulp.
Our pioneers keep striking
Inwards and downwards,

Every layer they strip
Seems camped on before.
The bogholes might be Atlantic seepage.
The wet centre is bottomless.

(from *Door into the Dark*, 1969)

Bog Oak

A carter's trophy
Split for rafters,
A cobwebbed, black,
long-seasoned rib

under the first thatch.
I might tarry
With the moustached
Dead, the creel-fillers,

Or eavesdrop on their hopeless wisdom
As a blow-down of smoke
Struggles over the half-door

And the mizzling rain
Blurs the far end
Of the cart track.
The softening ruts

Lead back to no
'oak groves', no
cutters of mistletoe
in the green clearings.

Perhaps I just make out Edmund Spenser,

Dreaming sunlight,
Encroached upon by
Geniuses who creep
‘out of every corner of the woodes and glennes’
towards watercress and carrion.

(from *Wintering Out*, 1972)

Making Strange

I stood between them,
the one with his traveled intelligence
and tawny containment,
his speech like the twang of a bowstring,

and another, unshorn and bewildered
in the tubs of his Wellingtons,
smiling at me for help,
faced with this stranger I’d brought him.

Then a cunning middle voice
came out of the field across the road
saying, ‘Be adept and be dialect,
tell of this wind coming past the zinc hut,

call me sweetbriar after the rain
or snowberries cooled in the fog.
But love the cut of this traveled one
and call me also the cornfield of Boaz.

Go beyond what’s reliable
in all that keeps pleading and pleading,
these eyes and puddles and stones,
and recollect how bold you were

when I visited you first
with departures you cannot go back on.’
A chaffinch flicked from an ash and next thing
I found myself driving the stranger

through my own country, adept
at dialect, reciting my pride
in all that I knew, that began to make strange
at the same recitation.

(from *Station Island*, 1984)

Man and Boy

'Catch the old one first,'
(My father's joke was also old, and heavy
And predictable). 'Then the young ones
Will all follow, and Bob's your uncle.'

On slow bright river evenings, the sweet time
Made him afraid we'd take too much for granted
And our spirits must be lightly checked.

Blessed be down-to-earth! Blessed be highs!
Blessed be the detachment of dumb love
In that broad-backed, low-set man

Who feared debt all his life, but now and then
Could make a splash like the salmon he said was
'As big as a wee pork pig by the sound of it'.

In earshot of the pool where the salmon jumped
Back through its own unheard concentric soundwaves
A mower leans forever on his scythe.

He has mown himself to the centre of the field
And stands in a final perfect ring
Of sunlit stubble.

'Go and tell your father,' the mower says
(He said it to my father who told me),
'I have mowed it as clean as a new sixpence.'

My father is a barefoot boy with news,
Running at eye-level with weeds and stooks
On the afternoon of his own father's death.

The open, black half of the door waits.
I feel much heat and hurry in the air.
I feel his legs and quick heels far away

And strange as my own – when he will piggyback me
At a great height, light-headed and thin-boned,
Like a witless elder rescued from the fire.

(from *Seeing Things*, 1991)

The Loose Box

Back at the dark end, slats angled tautly down
From a breast-high beam to the foot of the stable wall—
Silked and seasoned timber of the hayrack.
Marsupial brackets ... And a deep-littered silence
Off odourless, untainting, fibrous horsedung.

* * *

On an old recording Patrick Kavanagh states
That there's health and worth in any talk about
The properties of land. Sandy, glarry,
Mossy, heavy, cold, the actual soil
Almost doesn't matter; the main thing is
An inner restitution, a purchase come by
By pacing it in words that make you feel
You've found your feet in what "surefooted" means
And in the ground of your own understanding—
Like Heracles stepping in and standing under
Atlas's sky-lintel, as earthed and heady
As I am when I talk about the loose box.

* * *

*And they found the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes
And laid in a manger.*

But the plaster child in nappies,
Bare baby-breasted little *rigor vitae*,
Crook-armed, seed-nailed, nothing but gloss and chill—
He wasn't right at all.

And no hayrack
To be seen.

The solid stooping shepherds,
The stiff-lugged donkey, Joseph, Mary, each
Figure in the winter crib was well
And truly placed. There was even real straw
On the side-altar. And an out-of-scale,
Too crockery, kneeling cow. And fairy lights.
But no, no fodder-billowed armfuls spilling over ...
At the altar rail I knelt and learnt almost
Not to admit the let-down to myself.

* * *

Stable child, grown stabler when I read
In adolescence Thomas *dolens* Hardy—
Not, oddly enough, his Christmas Eve night-piece
About the oxen in their bedded stall,
But the threshing scene in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*—
That magnified my soul. Raving machinery,
The thresher bucking sky, rut-shuddery,
A headless Trojan horse expelling straw

From where the head should be, the underjaws
Like staircases set champing—it hummed and slugged
While the big sag and slew of the canvas belt
That would cut your head off if you didn't watch
Flowed from the flywheel. And comes flowing back,
The whole mote-sweaty havoc and mania
Of threshing day, the feeders up on top
Like pyre-high Aztec priests gutting forked sheaves
And paying them ungirded to the drum.
Slack of gulped straw, the belly-taut of seedbags.
And in the stilly night, chaff piled in ridges,
Earth raw where the four wheels rocked and battled.

* * *

Michael Collins, ambushed at Béal na Bláth,
At the Pass of Flowers, the Blossom Gap, his own
Bloom-drifted, soft Avernus-mouth,
Has nothing to hold on to and falls again
Willingly, lastly, foreknowledgeably deep
Into the hay-floor that gave once in his childhood
Down through the bedded mouth of the loft trapdoor,
The loosening fodder-chute, the aftermath ...
This has been told of Collins and retold
By his biographer:
 One of his boy-deeds
Was to enter the hidden jaws of that hay crevasse
And get to his feet again and come unscathed
Through a dazzle of pollen scarves to breathe the air.
True or not true, the fall within his fall,
That drop through the flower-floor lets him find his feet
In an underworld of understanding
Better than any newsreel lying-in-state
Or footage of the laden gun-carriage
And grim cortege could ever manage to.

Or so it can be stated
In the must and drift of talk about the loose box.

(from *Electric Light*, 2001)

Bann Valley Eclogue

Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus
—VIRGIL, Eclogue IV

POET: Bann Valley Muses, give us a song worth singing,
Something that rises like the curtain in
Those words *And it came to pass* or *In the beginning*.
Help me to please my hedge-schoolmaster Virgil
And the child that's due. Maybe, heavens, sing
Better times for her and her generation.

VIRGIL: Here are my words you'll have to find a place for:
Carmen, ordo, nascitur, saeculum, gens.
Their gist in your tongue and province should be clear
Even at this stage. Poetry, order, the times,
The nation, wrong and renewal, then an infant birth
And a flooding away of all the old miasma.

Whatever stains you, you rubbed it into yourselves:
Earth mark, birth mark, mould like the bloodied mould
On Romulus's ditch-back. But when the waters break
Banns stream will overflow, the old markings
Will avail no more to keep east bank from west.
The valley will be washed like the new baby.

POET: *Pacatum orbem*: your words are too much nearly.
Even “orb” by itself. What on earth could match it?
And then, last month, at noon-eclipse, wind dropped.
A millennial chill, birdless and dark, prepared.
A firstness steadied, a lastness, a born awareness
As name dawned into knowledge: I saw the orb.

VIRGIL: Eclipses won't be for this child. The cool she'll know
Will be the pram hood over her vestal head.
Big dog daisies will get fanked up in the spokes.
She'll lie on summer evenings listening to
A chug and slug going on in the milking parlour.
Let her never hear close gunfire or explosions.

POET: Why do I remember St. Patrick's mornings,
Being sent by my mother to the railway line
For the little trefoil, untouchable almost, the shamrock
With its twining, binding, creepery, tough, thin roots
All over the place, in the stones between the sleepers.
Dew-scales shook off the leaves. Tear-ducts asperging.

Child on the way, it won't be long until
You land among us. Your mother's showing signs,
Out for her sunset walk among big round bales.
Planet earth like a teething ring suspended

Hangs by its world-chain. Your pram waits in the corner.
Cows are let out. They're sluicing the milk-house floor.

(from *Electric Light*, 2001)

District and Circle

Tunes from a tin whistle underground
Curled up a corridor I'd be walking down
To where I knew I was always going to find
My watcher on the tiles, cap by his side,
His fingers perked, his two eyes eyeing me
In an unaccusing look I'd not avoid,
Or not just yet, since both were out to see
For ourselves.

As the music larked and capered
I'd trigger and untrigger a hot coin
Held at the ready, but now my gaze was lowered
For was our traffic not in recognition?
Accorded passage, I would re-pocket and nod
And he, still eyeing me, would also nod.

Posted, eyes front, along the dreamy ramparts
Of escalators ascending and descending
To a monotonous slight rocking in the works,
We were moved along, upstanding.
Elsewhere, underneath, an engine powered,
Rumbled, quickened, evened, quieted.
The white tiles gleamed. In passages that flowed
With draughts from cooler tunnels I missed the
Light
Of all-overing, long since mysterious day,
Parks at lunchtime where the sunners lay
On body-heated mown grass regardless,
A resurrection scene minutes before
The resurrection, habitués
Of their garden of delights, of their staggered summer.

Another level down, the platform thronged.
I re-entered the safety of numbers,
A crowd half straggle-ravelled and half strung
Like a human chain, the pushy newcomers
Jostling and purling underneath the vault,
On their marks to be first through the doors,
Street-loud, then succumbing to herd-quiet...
Had I betrayed or not, myself or him?
Always new to me, always familiar,
This unrepentant, now repentant turn
As I stood waiting, glad of a first tremor,
Then caught up in the now or never whelm
Of one and all the full length of the train.

Stepping on to it across the gap,
On to the carriage metal, I reached to grab
The stubby black roof-wort and take my stand
From planted ball of heel to heel of hand
As sweet traction and heavy down-slump stayed me
I was on my way, well girded, yet on edge,
Spot-rooted, buoyed, aloof,
Listening to the dwindling noises off,
My back to the unclosed door, the platform empty;
And wished it could have lasted,
That long between-times pause before the budge
And glaze over, when any forwardness
Was unwelcome and bodies readjusted,
Blindsided to themselves and other bodies.

So deeper into it, crowd-swept, strap-hanging,
My lofted arm a-swivel like a flail,
My father's glazed face in my own waning
And craning...

 Again the growl
Of shutting doors, the jolt and one-off treble
Of iron on iron, then a long centrifugal
Haulage of speed through every dragging socket.

And so by night and day to be transported
Through galleried earth with them, the only relict
Of all that I belonged to, hurtled forward,
Reflecting in a window mirror-backed
By blasted weeping rock walls

Flicker-lit.

(from *District and Circle*, 2006)

Mussel Hunter at Rock Harbor

I came before the water ---
Colorists came to get the
Good of the Cape light that scours
Sand grit to sided crystal
And buffs and sleeks the blunt hulls
Of the three fishing smacks beached
On the bank of the river's

Backtracking tail. I'd come for
Free fish-bait: the blue mussels
Clumped like bulbs at the grassroot
Margin of the tidal pools.
Dawn tide stood dead low. I smelt
Mud stench, shell guts, gulls' leavings;
Heard a queer crusty scrabble

Cease, and I neared the silenced
Edge of a cratered pool-bed.
The mussels hung dull blue and
Conspicuous, yet it seemed
A sly world's hinges had swung
Shut against me. All held still.
Though I counted scant seconds,

Enough ages lapsed to win
Confidence of safe-conduct
In the wary other world
Eyeing me. Grass put forth claws,
Small mud knobs, nudged from under,
Displaced their domes as tiny
Knights might doff their casques. The crabs

Inched from their pygmy burrows
And from the trench-dug mud, all Camouflaged in mottled mail
Of browns and greens. Each wore one
Claw swollen to a shield large
As itself--no fiddler's arm
Grown Gargantuan by trade,

But grown grimly, and grimly
Borne, for a use beyond my
Guessing of it. Sibilant
Mass-motivated hordes, they sidled
Out in a converging stream
Toward the pool-mouth, perhaps to
Meet the thin and sluggish thread

Of sea retracing its tide-
Way up the river-basin.
Or to avoid me. They moved
Obliquely with a dry-wet
Sound, with a glittery wisp
And trickle. Could they feel mud
Pleasurable under claws

As I could between bare toes?
That question ended it--I
Stood shut out, for once, for all,
Puzzling the passage of their
Absolutely alien
Order as I might puzzle
At the clear tail of Halley's

Comet coolly giving my
Orbit the go-by, made known
By a family name it
Knew nothing of. So the crabs
Went about their business, which
Wasn't fiddling, and I filled
A big handkerchief with blue

Mussels. From what the crabs saw,
If they could see, I was one
Two-legged mussel-picker.
High on the airy thatching
Of the dense grasses I found
The husk of a fiddler-crab,
Intact, strangely strayed above

His world of mud--green color
And innards bleached out blown off
Somewhere by much sun and wind;
There was no telling if he'd
Died recluse of suicide
Or headstrong Columbus crab.
The crab-face, etched and set there,

Grimaced as skulls grimace: it
Had an Oriental look,
A samurai death mask done
On a tiger tooth, less for
Art's sake than God's. Far from sea ---
Where red-freckled crab-backs, claws
And whole crabs, dead, their soggy

Bellies pallid and upturned,
Perform their shambling waltzes
On the waves' dissolving turn

And return, losing themselves
Bit by bit to their friendly
Element--this relic saved
Face, to face the bald-faced sun.

(from *The Colossus*, 1960)

Blackberrying

Nobody in the lane, and nothing, nothing but blackberries,
Blackberries on either side, though on the right mainly,
A blackberry alley, going down in hooks, and a sea
Somewhere at the end of it, heaving. Blackberries
Big as the ball of my thumb, and dumb as eyes
Ebon in the hedges, fat
With blue-red juices. These they squander on my fingers.
I had not asked for such a blood sisterhood; they must love me.
They accommodate themselves to my milkbottle, flattening their sides.

Overhead go the choughs in black, cacophonous flocks --
Bits of burnt paper wheeling in a blown sky.
Theirs is the only voice, protesting, protesting.
I do not think the sea will appear at all.
The high, green meadows are glowing, as if lit from within.
I come to one bush of berries so ripe it is a bush of flies,
Hanging their bluegreen bellies and their wing panes in a Chinese screen.
The honey-feast of the berries has stunned them; they believe in heaven.
One more hook, and the berries and bushes end.

The only thing to come now is the sea.
From between two hills a sudden wind funnels at me,
Slapping its phantom laundry in my face.
These hills are too green and sweet to have tasted salt.
I follow the sheep path between them. A last hook brings me
To the hills' northern face, and the face is orange rock
That looks out on nothing, nothing but a great space
Of white and pewter lights, and a din like silversmiths
Beating and beating at an intractable metal.

(from *The Collected Poems*, 1961)

(v) Patrick Kavanagh

Advent

We have tested and tasted too much, lover-
Through a chink too wide there comes in no wonder.
But here in the Advent-darkened room
Where the dry black bread and the sugarless tea
Of penance will charm back the luxury
Of a child's soul, we'll return to Doom
The knowledge we stole but could not use.

And the newness that was in every stale thing
When we looked at it as children: the spirit-shocking
Wonder in a black slanting Ulster hill
Or the prophetic astonishment in the tedious talking
Of an old fool will awake for us and bring
You and me to the yard gate to watch the whins
And the bog-holes, cart-tracks, old stables where Time begins.

O after Christmas we'll have no need to go searching
For the difference that sets an old phrase burning-
We'll hear it in the whispered argument of a churning
Or in the streets where the village boys are lurching.
And we'll hear it among decent men too
Who barrow dung in gardens under trees,
Wherever life pours ordinary plenty.
Won't we be rich, my love and I, and
God we shall not ask for reason's payment,
The why of heart-breaking strangeness in dreeping hedges
Nor analyse God's breath in common statement.
We have thrown into the dust-bin the clay-minted wages
Of pleasure, knowledge and the conscious hour-
And Christ comes with a January flower.

(from *A Soul for Sale*, 1947)

Innocence

They laughed at one I loved-
The triangular hill that hung
Under the Big Forth. They said
That I was bounded by the whitethorn hedges
Of the little farm and did not know the world.
But I knew that love's doorway to life
Is the same doorway everywhere.
Ashamed of what I loved
I flung her from me and called her a ditch
Although she was smiling at me with violets.

But now I am back in her briary arms
The dew of an Indian Summer lies
On bleached potato-stalks
What age am I?

I do not know what age I am,
I am no mortal age;
I know nothing of women,
Nothing of cities,
I cannot die
Unless I walk outside these whitethorn hedges.

(from *Come Dance with Kitty Stobling and Other Poems*, 1960)

Epic

I have lived in important places, times
When great events were decided: who owned
That half a rood of rock, a no-man's land
Surrounded by our pitchfork-armed claims.

I heard the Duffys shouting "Damn your soul"
And old McCabe stripped to the waist, seen
Step the plot defying blue cast-steel -
"Here is the march along these iron stones."

That was the year of the Munich bother. Which
Was most important? I inclined
To lose my faith in Ballyrush and Gortin
Till Homer's ghost came whispering to my mind.
He said: I made the Iliad from such
A local row. Gods make their own importance.

(from *Come Dance with Kitty Stobling and Other Poems*, 1960)

Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

(from *The Rose*, 1893)

The Tower

I
WHAT shall I do with this absurdity -
O heart, O troubled heart - this caricature,
Decrepit age that has been tied to me
As to a dog's tail?
Never had I more
Excited, passionate, fantastical
Imagination, nor an ear and eye
That more expected the impossible -
No, not in boyhood when with rod and fly,
Or the humbler worm, I climbed Ben Bulbin's back
And had the livelong summer day to spend.
It seems that I must bid the Muse go pack,
Choose Plato and Plotinus for a friend
Until imagination, ear and eye,
Can be content with argument and deal
In abstract things; or be derided by
A sort of battered kettle at the heel.

II
I pace upon the battlements and stare
On the foundations of a house, or where
Tree, like a sooty finger, starts from the earth;
And send imagination forth
Under the day's declining beam, and call
Images and memories

From ruin or from ancient trees,
For I would ask a question of them all.

Beyond that ridge lived Mrs. French, and once
When every silver candlestick or sconce
Lit up the dark mahogany and the wine.
A serving-man, that could divine
That most respected lady's every wish,
Ran and with the garden shears
Clipped an insolent farmer's ears
And brought them in a little covered dish.

Some few remembered still when I was young
A peasant girl commended by a Song,
Who'd lived somewhere upon that rocky place,
And praised the colour of her face,
And had the greater joy in praising her,
Remembering that, if walked she there,
Farmers jostled at the fair
So great a glory did the song confer.

And certain men, being maddened by those rhymes,
Or else by toasting her a score of times,
Rose from the table and declared it right
To test their fancy by their sight;
But they mistook the brightness of the moon
For the prosaic light of day -
Music had driven their wits astray -
And one was drowned in the great bog of Cloone.

Strange, but the man who made the song was blind;
Yet, now I have considered it, I find
That nothing strange; the tragedy began
With Homer that was a blind man,
And Helen has all living hearts betrayed.
O may the moon and sunlight seem
One inextricable beam,
For if I triumph I must make men mad.

And I myself created Hanrahan
And drove him drunk or sober through the dawn
From somewhere in the neighbouring cottages.
Caught by an old man's juggleries
He stumbled, tumbled, fumbled to and fro
And had but broken knees for hire
And horrible splendour of desire;
I thought it all out twenty years ago:

Good fellows shuffled cards in an old bawn;
And when that ancient ruffian's turn was on
He so bewitched the cards under his thumb
That all but the one card became

A pack of hounds and not a pack of cards,
And that he changed into a hare.
Hanrahan rose in frenzy there
And followed up those baying creatures towards -

O towards I have forgotten what - enough!
I must recall a man that neither love
Nor music nor an enemy's clipped ear
Could, he was so harried, cheer;
A figure that has grown so fabulous
There's not a neighbour left to say
When he finished his dog's day:
An ancient bankrupt master of this house.

Before that ruin came, for centuries,
Rough men-at-arms, cross-gartered to the knees
Or shod in iron, climbed the narrow stairs,
And certain men-at-arms there were
Whose images, in the Great Memory stored,
Come with loud cry and panting breast
To break upon a sleeper's rest
While their great wooden dice beat on the board.

As I would question all, come all who can;
Come old, necessitous. half-mounted man;
And bring beauty's blind rambling celebrant;
The red man the juggler sent
Through God-forsaken meadows; Mrs. French,
Gifted with so fine an ear;
The man drowned in a bog's mire,
When mocking Muses chose the country wench.

Did all old men and women, rich and poor,
Who trod upon these rocks or passed this door,
Whether in public or in secret rage
As I do now against old age?
But I have found an answer in those eyes
That are impatient to be gone;
Go therefore; but leave Hanrahan,
For I need all his mighty memories.

Old lecher with a love on every wind,
Bring up out of that deep considering mind
All that you have discovered in the grave,
For it is certain that you have
Reckoned up every unforeknown, unseeing
plunge, lured by a softening eye,
Or by a touch or a sigh,
Into the labyrinth of another's being;

Does the imagination dwell the most
Upon a woman won or woman lost?

If on the lost, admit you turned aside
From a great labyrinth out of pride,
Cowardice, some silly over-subtle thought
Or anything called conscience once;
And that if memory recur, the sun's
Under eclipse and the day blotted out.

III

It is time that I wrote my will;
I choose upstanding men
That climb the streams until
The fountain leap, and at dawn
Drop their cast at the side
Of dripping stone; I declare
They shall inherit my pride,
The pride of people that were
Bound neither to Cause nor to State.
Neither to slaves that were spat on,
Nor to the tyrants that spat,
The people of Burke and of Grattan
That gave, though free to refuse -
pride, like that of the morn,
When the headlong light is loose,
Or that of the fabulous horn,
Or that of the sudden shower
When all streams are dry,
Or that of the hour
When the swan must fix his eye
Upon a fading gleam,
Float out upon a long
Last reach of glittering stream
And there sing his last song.
And I declare my faith:
I mock Plotinus' thought
And cry in Plato's teeth,
Death and life were not
Till man made up the whole,
Made lock, stock and barrel
Out of his bitter soul,
Aye, sun and moon and star, all,
And further add to that
That, being dead, we rise,
Dream and so create
Translunar paradise.
I have prepared my peace
With learned Italian things
And the proud stones of Greece,
Poet's imaginings
And memories of love,
Memories of the words of women,
All those things whereof

Man makes a superhuman,
Mirror-resembling dream.

As at the loophole there
The daws chatter and scream,
And drop twigs layer upon layer.
When they have mounted up,
The mother bird will rest
On their hollow top,
And so warm her wild nest.

I leave both faith and pride
To young upstanding men
Climbing the mountain-side,
That under bursting dawn
They may drop a fly;
Being of that metal made
Till it was broken by
This sedentary trade.

Now shall I make my soul,
Compelling it to study
In a learned school
Till the wreck of body,
Slow decay of blood,
Testy delirium
Or dull decrepitude,
Or what worse evil come -
The death of friends, or death
Of every brilliant eye
That made a catch in the breath - .
Seem but the clouds of the sky
When the horizon fades;
Or a bird's sleepy cry
Among the deepening shades.

(from *The Tower*, 1928)

(vii) William Shakespeare

Sonnet 86

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence
As victors of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

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